

Why Are Siblings the Most Frustrating Relationships?

- It's very dramatic. I feel like I should do something incredible. It's not gonna happen. Good to see you. Hey, welcome to Trendy we love you. So honored to have you. We're in a great book of the Bible called Genesis and today's subject is why are siblings the most frustrating relationships? And if you're a first time visitor and your brother or sister brought you now, you know why. Okay, we're gonna heal it all up for you. And so as we're dealing in the book of Genesis, here's kinda where we've come. And Genesis one and two we saw that God made everyone and everything, he made it perfect. Everything was great. Genesis 3, we sin against God. The result is that sin infects and affects everyone and everything but it has particular pain for our marriage and our family. So we see Adam and Eve as soon as sin enters the world, they turn on each other, they blame one another, they hide from one another. They do have two kids, two sons, Cain and Abel it doesn't take long and one brother kills the other. Cain murders Abel. So the pain of sin immediately impacts marriage and family. Now, we are far removed about 4,000 years from the writing of Genesis, but sin and the fall and the curse still exist and we tend to feel that pain most prominently with our family. Marriage is hard. If you've been married for more than 15 minutes, you know exactly what I'm talking about. If you have children you know that raising them can be difficult and painful. When you grow up your siblings are gonna drive you crazy and test the limits of your ability not to commit homicide. Over and over and over again, the sin of the fall infects the relationships that are most near and dear to us. Now, what happens is most people feel this problem but they don't understand its solution. And so what we're trying to do as a human race is figure, okay, what went wrong and how do we make it right. And so some people choose an internal answer, I'm gonna go with my thoughts. I'm gonna study and read and try and figure out how to make my life and my family and my legacy better. For other people, they'll choose a philosophical system and go in that route of philosophy. For others, they'll find a religious or spiritual guru or vote for a politician or just do what your parents tell you to do or find a good counselor or therapist and hope they can straighten out all that life is made crooked. Other people, not in addition to, but also alongside of the internal they're gonna get the external. Some people it's internal, it's really, what do you feel? What does your gut tell you? What does your hunch? So we have these combinations of internal and external authorities and advice sources and life never really gets straightened out. So if you're new, let me tell you what we're doing. We're going through a whole book of the Bible. We're gonna take the better part of a year. It's a book that's about 4,000 years old, it's Eastern. It's originally written in Hebrew and it looks at the human race. And we're now looking at three generations of a case study of a family, Abraham and his wife, Sarah. And then they had a son, Isaac, and now they have a grandson. They have two grandsons actually, Jacob and Esau. So we're looking at the third generation and we're asking what are the positive and negative lessons that we can learn from their family for our family. And let me just tell you this. If you believe the Bible, you come expecting to learn. Many of you however, do not. And I just want you to give the Bible a hearing. And I want you to see what has happened in our world is a very rapid walking away from even a consideration of the Bible is God's word. So I wanna share this with you it came up this week before we get into a book of the Bible and a whole chapter. These are the latest findings from the Gallup survey. These are Americans Christian and non who believe the Bible is the literal word of God, okay? If you're part of our church family, do we believe that?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- Yes, yes. This is why we go through books of the Bible. We deal with all the verses, we even deal with the genealogies. We assume that if God put it in the Bible, it's there for us and we need to figure out why. In 1980, oh gosh, I miss Reagan. 1980 40% of Americans believe that the Bible was God's word. In 1984 it was still 40%. By 2017, it was 24%. By 2022, it was down to 20%. That in my lifetime, the number of Americans who believe that this is God's word is down by half. Now, the thought is, well, certainly the Christians would fare better. And let me just share with you it's concerning these are people who profess to be Christians, God knows their heart. But of those who profess to be Christians, only 25% say that the Bible is God's perfect literal word. Only 25%. 58% say it's imperfect, it's inspired of God but it's not literal it has some problems. There are some mistakes and errors, there are some things that need to be updated. And 16% say it's a myth, it's a book of ancient fables. And what's really curious is some of you may ask, why do we go through books of the Bible because I believe that the Bible is absolutely incontrovertibly entirely God's word. And ultimately, if you wanna hear a word from God you need to open the word of God. And the further that we get away from the Bible what we find is addiction, assault, mental health, depression, divorce. It just increases and my thesis is this maybe less Bible isn't working. Just hypothetically, maybe less Bible isn't working. And so whether or not you believe the Bible, I want you to give it a hearing today. Just give it a consideration see if God doesn't have something specific to say to you, maybe about your life, maybe about your marriage, maybe about your family. 93% of you will marry at some point, most of us are going to have children. Does God's word have anything to say for our life and for our legacy and how does it affect our family. So I'm gonna give you the sermon. There's a brand new study guide out for this section of Genesis, it's free. You get what you pay for lawyer expectations. You can also get it for free at realfaith.com and or sign up for daily devotions. But what we're gonna do now, we're actually gonna look at what the Bible says. And a lot of people have rejected the Bible but they haven't read the Bible. A lot of people think they know what it says but they haven't studied enough to actually know what it says. So what we're gonna do today, we're gonna read a lot of Bible. We're gonna start right here, family division. We're gonna look at a family three generations. When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim. How many of you are of an age where seeing is now something that you miss, amen. Let me tell you this if you're in your 20s two things I would recommend. Number one, look at things while you can. Number two, eat carbs. Those days come to an end. You can't see anything and if you smell a cookie you blow up like a puffer fish. I don't know why, it's just the way that it works. I turn 50 I turn blind. I now have a phone that my kids refer to as dad's flat screen. I have a monitor I work on to write books and it's the same size as the old drive-in movie theater screen that we would go to as a kid. And I still have to wear cheater glasses to just see what's going on. Recently, I'll tell you a story. So recently I was trying to read something, something that at one point in my life I could do and now it requires a superpower. I couldn't read it I handed it to my kid I said, "What does this say?" They said, "Dad, can't you read?" I can read, I just can't see, that's all. Okay, I just can't see. So he's reached that age. He's actually around 100 but just to let you know if you're 49, this happens at 50. So clock's ticking son. When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim

so that he could not see, he called Esau. He's got two twin sons, Jacob and Esau. His older son had said to him and said, "My son," notice that line, my son, we're gonna revisit that. And he answered here, "I am." He said, "Behold, I am old. "I do not know the day of my death." I don't know when I'm gonna die. He thinks he's gonna die soon, he's actually gonna live a lot longer. There are times as you get older that you feel like maybe the finish line is in sight and then you recover and bounce back. He thinks he's gonna die, but he's not. Now then take your weapons. So, you know, it's an open carry state. So, you know, take your weapons. Your quiver and your bow, he's a good hunter, he's good outside, he's a warrior. Go out to the field and hunt game for me. Let's get some good game and prepare for me delicious food such as I love and bring it to me that I may eat that my soul may bless you before I die. Now, here's his wife, Rebecca was what? She's listening, she's eavesdropping. Okay, one honest wife chuckled, the rest feel nervous. It feels funny, but I don't know we're in church I'm very conflicted. She's eavesdropping on her husband's... I know you ladies have never done that, but this is a good point in the sermon to just stop and pray for the other ladies who struggle with this. Bless their heart. So now Rebecca was listening when Isaac spoke to his son, there's the line again, Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it, Rebecca said to her son, you notice the line, her son, Jacob. Just so you know, these two twin brothers they're different. Esau is too tough, Jacob is too tender. Esau hunts fishes and Jacob quails and . He's just that kid. He's over mothered, he is. He is, he is. He's huge Elton John fan loves his crocs. Yeah. Yep. Some guy out there is like, I'm offended. You should be. "I heard your father speak to your brother Esau he said, 'Bring me game and prepare for me delicious food.'" How many of you guys like game wild meat? How many of you are the guys you eat what you kill. "That I may eat it and bless you before the Lord "before I die." Now, therefore my son, you keep hearing this language, obey my voice, do what mama says. Here's the problem though. He's a grown man. He's not a little boy. Obey my voice as I command you go to the flock bring... She's not gonna send him out to hunt, she knows that's not gonna happen. "Go to the flock bring me two good young goats "so that I may prepare from them "delicious food for your father such as he loves. "You go get an animal, I'll cook it, "bring it to your father to eat that he may bless you "before he dies." They're gonna trick him. But Jacob said to Rebecca, his mother, behold, my brother Esau is... He's a hairy man and I am a.

- [Congregation] Smooth man.

- Smooth man. I don't know if he's a swimmer, I don't know what's going on. In high school those guys shaved their legs I was like, yeah, I'm not gonna swim. Let me just... Let me just do this for a moment. I feel like we need to stop here and have a conversation. How many of you are fuzzy buddies? You're my hairy guy, you're a hairy man, any guys? I don't... People... I don't have a hair growth problem I have a hair distribution problem, that's what I have. My bangs have gone home to be with the Lord, but my arms look like my dad's a and my mom was . Like it's crazy. So I'm just disappointed that the hairy guy in the story is the bad guy. I'm just emotionally just have the heart funeral for a moment, okay. "Perhaps my father will feel me "and shall seen to be mocking him "and bring a curse upon myself and not a blessing." He's like, well, if we're gonna go in and trick dad, he's furry I'm not furry. Even though dad's blind, he's gonna figure this out.

They're kind of picking on their blind old dad. That's not good. His mother said to him, this is crazy. Let your curse beyond me my son. She's inviting God to curse her and I would encourage you don't do that. Only obey my voice and go bring them to me. So he's of mama's boy, Esau's the daddy's boy. "So he went and he took them "and he brought them to his mother "and his mother prepared him delicious food "such as his father loved. "Then Rebecca took the best garments of Esau, her older son, "which were with her in the house "and put them on Jacob her younger son. "And the skins of the young goats, "he had to be super furry." This dude is gonna wear goat skin, that's awesome. You know, that's amazing. And the skins of the young goats she put on his hands, kinda like the world's weirdest gloves and the smooth part of his neck. This is odd. "And she put the delicious food in the bread, "which she had prepared into the hand of her son, Jacob." Here's what's going on. It all starts... The problems all start with division. Here's the two twin boys. They started fighting wrestling in their mother's womb. They were fighting on the way out of the womb. She prayed and she asked the Lord, what's going on? He said, you got two sons, they're gonna be two nations. They're fighting right now and they're gonna be fighting for a very long time. Now, the problem becomes they fought in the womb, they fought through the birth, they fought through their childhood. Now they're adults they're still fighting. Sometimes time doesn't improve a sibling relationship. Sometimes like, well they're gonna grow out of it or not. And what happens is the parents do something that is a generational problem over and over and over in Genesis, they play favorites. If you... Let me just say this, you can't have a favorite child if you have more than one. If you have one child, you can have a favorite. Soon as you get two kids, you're not allowed to have a favorite. And so the problem becomes Esau is daddy's boy. He calls him, "My son." And then Jacob is mama's boy she calls him, "My son." They've each got a kid that they prefer over the other. Now, how many of you are parents? Let's just be honest, okay. Are there... If you have more than one kid, is there at least one, don't shout out their name, but is there at least one kid you're like, they're the harder one to parent and love and raise. Yeah. Sometimes it's because they're like you. You've reaped what you've shown. You're like, they're stubborn and so am I so we keep doing this. Sometimes they remind you of someone that you had a conflict with in the past. And some kids are just going to give you a run for your money. Okay, we had one of these kids. I won't say which name, but I had one of those... My deal with the kids was always when there growing up, I look at it like, okay, you got two options. You could do what I say or I'm gonna discipline you and then you're gonna do what I say. Those are the two... I mean, this is clear. We had one kid they were like, you're gonna need to discipline me. Let me just repeat your options. Nope, you're gonna have to discipline me. The other kids are like, I'll go with the non discipline. There are just certain kids they're gonna wear you out. They're gonna exhaust you, they're gonna frustrate you. True.

- [Congregation] True.

- True. That's why you dropped them in kids' ministry. You like fix them, cast the demon out, lay hands on them, heal them. If I pick them up, I expect them to be different. And so there are gonna be certain times with every kid that they're gonna test us, but certain kids are gonna be harder to parent than others. But here's the big idea. You're still the parent and your heart needs

to be for them not hardened against them. And it's a... But we still do this in our families. Again, Genesis doesn't just tell us what happened but what always happens. So let me just give an example. So let's say dad goes to work, mom's home. One of the boys is just giving mom a run for her money. Dad comes home mom says, you need to deal with

- [Congregation] Your son.

- A lot of the moms are like, I know this one, your son. That's the same thing that they're saying, this is my son, that's your son. And the point is, you may not know this what you just did was disown your son. I don't know why you're laughing, but the parents is like, that's it, I'm out. That's your kid. You deal with them. We need to be aligned as parents, we can't play favorites and it's not, okay, this is your kid, this is my kid. Let me say that as well this is hardest in a blended family. Right? A blended family can be a beautiful family, but it is complicated. If you've got kids and they got kids and then you go the Brady bunch route, you bring them all together. It can be very easy to say, well, those are your kids and these are my kids but the truth is that can be a dividing point between the parents. You're still the mother and father in the home even if they have a mother and father that are still involved in their life extended, you're still immediately responsible. You gotta figure out how to agree in the raising of the child. So the big fight here is who's gonna get the blessing. We looked at it earlier in Genesis and there was a birthright and here there is a blessing. Now, commentators will argue about this but my take is that the birthright and the blessing are different. The birthright was given by God to the child that was born first, the first born. The blessing was not given from the heavenly father, but from the earthly father. Earlier we saw that Esau came home and Jacob told him, hey, I'll trade you this fantastic stew for the birthright. He and his dad both they apparently really like wild game food, that's their thing. And so what he says is, I will trade you the birthright for the stew. And it says that he despised his blessing. And we see his wife saying, I don't care about God, I don't care about God's will for my life, I don't care about anything that God has for me, I would take the stew over God's birthright for my life. And let me just say, this we've all got our stew. Every one of us has something that we so enjoy that is so tempting, it is so comforting, it is so enjoyable that in a moment we can forget the principle of delayed gratification and we can exchange real intimacy and provision from God for something that is immediate and shortsighted. For some people, food is their stew, for others it's alcohol, for some it's sex, for some it's porn, for some it's gambling, for some it's shopping, we've all got our stew. We've all got something that if it was put in front of us, we might lose sight of everything God has for us and trade God's destiny for that immediate pleasure. And that's what he does. Now, here he does care about the blessing, he doesn't care about the birthright from God but he does care about the blessing from his father. What this means is he loves his dad but he doesn't love his dad's God. So he doesn't care about God, but he does care about the blessing from his father. And a blessing from a father in that culture, it had emotional, spiritual, and practical implications. Emotionally it was very healing. The dad would literally lay hands over you and pray over you. And he would tell you that he loved you and he was proud of you. He might apologize for ways he had failed you to unburden you. And let me just say this, for those of us who are fathers, this is powerful. This is tremendously powerful in the life of a son or a daughter. I love you, I'm proud of you, I'm

speaking blessing over you, God has a destiny for you, I wanna unburden you, and I also wanna apologize for the ways that I failed you. If people get that, it can literally deliver them and then launch them into the next season of their life. In addition to the emotional blessing, there was a spiritual anointing. You're asking the Holy Spirit to bless them, to lead them, to guide them. You're asking the God who is faithful to you to be faithful to them. So here it would be Abraham was grandpa Isaac's dad, whatever son gets the blessing is getting the anointing for the third generation. This is huge. In addition to the emotional and the spiritual there was practical. The father would declare kind of what his intentions were. This is like the equivalent of our will. In our day, we have estates, we tend to write out wills and it's the way of declaring here's what I want for the next generation. The blessing was the father's way of declaring his intent for the next generation. Who's gonna get the land, who's gonna get the money, who's gonna get the possessions, who's gonna be the leader. How's all this gonna get architected and work, it's a big deal. And usually it was done publicly. Why would it be done publicly? 'Cause the whole family needs to know what the deal is. Can you imagine if a will was written and only one member of the family ever got to read it. They're like, I don't trust you. So what happens is there's a public reading of the will so that everybody knows that's what they wanted. Here this blessing was done with a meal as a celebration. The whole family would get together and the father would then give a blessing to one child he would also pray and give blessings to other children but he would set up the next generation of the family. Question, are they doing this publicly or privately? Privately, why? They're being sneaky, secretive, sinful, and shameful. Because he knows that his wife doesn't agree with him. Now, I know you guys have never done this in your marriage, but think of someone you know where the husband and wife don't agree so they hide things from each other and they go behind each other's back and they manipulate things without the other knowing, that's what's happening. The division started with the mother and the father and now it is extended to the sons. Okay, rule number one, division is demonic, division is destructive, division is deadly. Jesus says a family that is divided will fall down cannot remain standing. Division literally means two visions. What we have here, two visions. Mom has a vision for one son, dad has a vision for the other son, that's division. Until mom and dad have a unified division, a unified vision rather, this family's gonna suffer from division, okay. Now, I can just feel the temperature in the room. You're processing your family of origins, aren't you? You're thinking about your family. You're like my mom and dad didn't really agree and they were the favorite or I was the favorite and yeah there was a lot of sneakiness and don't tell your dad this and don't tell your mom that. And hey, just do what I tell you and don't... The family doesn't need to know this will just be our little secret. What happens next, family deception. It goes from division to deception. Genesis 27:18-29. "So he went into his father." So he sneaks in. How many of you see this? This is really awful. His dad is old and blind. He's gonna take advantage of it. Horrible things happen when wealthy family members get older. We find ways to manipulate and use them for our own benefit and inheritance, okay. This is why abuse of the aged is one of the worst sins. Hey, just sign this contract. What does it say, dad? Oh, don't worry about it's no big deal. Just sign this will. What does it say? I can't read it, oh, trust me, dad. I'll read it for you. This is a lot of deception here. So he went into his father and said, "My father," and he said, "Here I am." Who are you my son, dad kinda senses something's up. "Jacob said to his father, 'I am a Esau your first born.'" He is lying to his dad. "I have done as you told me.

"Now, sit up and eat of my game that your soul may bless me. "But Isaac said to his son, 'How is it that you found it so quickly my son.'" That was a quick hunt. You killed it, carried it back, you gutted it, you prepared it, you cooked it, that was quick. "How is it that you found it so quickly my son. "He said, 'Because the Lord your God granted me... Praise the Lord dad. He's a religious kid. When he is caught in his sin, he starts talking very spiritually. Oh, praise the Lord, dad it was like a miracle. I went out on the front porch and boom I shot it from the front porch. Didn't even have to carry it home, amazing. Dad, praise the Lord. Hallelujah, amen. Got a tambourine dad, let's worship. Religious people when caught in sin will get more spiritual, more God talk, and more deceptive by bringing the Lord into the deception. Then Isaac said to Jacob, please come near me that I may feel you. He's like you don't sound like my son. I'm not sure what's going on. "To know whether you are really my son Esau or not. "So Jacob went near to Isaac's father who felt him and said, 'The voice is Jacob.'" See, you can fake the smell wearing the clothes, you can fake the fur, you can't fake the voice. Jacob's got a high voice, Esau's got a deep voice. The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands were the hands of Esau. Dude had some fuzzy fingers. I'm just pointing that out. "And he did not recognize him because his hands were hairy "like his brother Esau's hands." How many of you are reading this and you're remembering all the times you deceived your parents growing up. "So he blessed him, he said, 'Are you really my son Esau?'" Dad's not sure. At that point the boy's conscience should have kicked in, amen. Man, dad keeps checking. I keep lying. He answered, "I am. "Then he said, bring it near to me "that I may eat at my son's game and bless him. "So he brought it near to him and he ate "and he brought him wine" makes you wonder how much wine. Never seen a guy with a few drinks who got more discerning. "And he drank. "Then his father Isaac said to him, 'Come near and kiss me my son.'" This is almost like a Judas move here. He's deceiving and betraying his father with a kiss. "So he came near and kissed him "and Isaac smelled the smell of his garments "and blessed him and said, 'Here's the blessing.' "See the smell of my son "is as the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. "May God give you of the dew of heaven "and the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine. "Let people serve you and nations bow down to you. "Be lord over your brothers, "may your mother's sons bow down to you. "Cursed be everyone who curses you "and blessed be everyone who blesses you." He steals the blessing, okay. Emotionally, here's what's gonna happen. Some of you are gonna start reliving your upbringing. You're like, I... Some of you are like I had a sibling like that. They were always set me up, cruel, mean, selfish, taking advantage. And if you're like, I didn't have a sibling like that then you were that sibling. Either way you're in the story, okay. Let me pull out some marriage lessons from this case study. For a married couple your priorities should be your loyalties. We looked earlier in Genesis our first priority should be our relationship with God. Second priority should be our relationship with our spouse. Third relationship priority should be relationship with our child or our children. Here, the mother and the father they make their relationship with the child more important than their marriage. They're deceiving one another, right? Dad is sneaking and mom is eavesdropping and scheming and plotting, they're both guilty. Furthermore, they are ignoring their relationship with God. They are harming their relationship with each other and their God given priorities are not their practical loyalties. Number two, the couple at war for what they want need to stop and worship God to figure out what He wants. Here's what dad says, I want my boy, Esau. Mom says, I want my boy, Jacob. They don't stop and ask, "Hey God, what do you want?" They don't

worship about it, they don't pray together, they don't seek the Lord's will. The bigger the decision the more vital the unity between the husband and the wife. This is a massive decision that will have generational implications. They have to be together and aligned. And so I would just tell you if you're married, don't make any major decision until you are in agreement and aligned. For grace and I, unless we agree, it's not time to make the decision. And if she thinks one thing and I think the other, we need to fast and pray and seek the Lord and find God's will. 'Cause at the end of the day, you don't want his will or her will, you want the Lord's will and you come together under his authority. This is a crisis in the family. But let me say this, the problem is with the boys but it starts with the parents. Parenting lessons. Number one, marriage problems become parenting problems. Oftentimes parents think, well, we didn't think that our messed up marriage would affect the kids. Does it? Yes. Well, we didn't think if we had a bad marriage, we still loved you kids, we thought you'd be fine. We didn't think that our marriage would negatively impact and affect, it does. Marriage problems become parenting problems. So here they have a marriage problem. They are dishonest, they are divided, they are deceptive and it affects the kids. This is where the greatest two things that we can give our kids is a healthy relationship with God and a healthy relationship with our spouse. And then children coming into an environment where mom and dad are unified under God's authority. That's not what's happening here. In addition, parenting makes things better over parenting makes things worse. Are the mom and the dad here over parenting? Yeah, these are grown adult men. These are not little boys. And it should be, if you boys don't get along, like we're gonna coach you, but you gotta figure this out. Ultimately, we need to have a meeting as a family, mom and dad need to be overt, put it all on the table. We need to seek God's will, we need to let you boys know what we're gonna do, and then we need to shift the burden of your relationship to you. You boys gotta figure this out. You're grown men, you're adults now, you're supposed to leave your father and mother supposed to stand on your own two feet. Parenting makes things better over parenting makes things worse. I love you, but this little bit of a stern word, if you're a Christian parent, you probably over parent, you probably over parent. Meaning you care so much that you don't trust the Lord so you insert yourself. This is a family of faith. Abraham, Sarah they're denoted throughout the Bible with faith. They walked in faith not perfectly now their children and grandchildren need to walk in faith. Let me tell you this. Sometimes the hardest thing to trust to the Lord it's not your sin it's your kids. For God if I don't make the decision, they're gonna make the wrong decision. But at some point they need to start making decisions. But God, if I don't... If I don't get involved and fix it and save them, they're gonna mess up their life and they might. But at some point, you and I... I got five kids. I'll tell you this at some point, I'm not gonna be there. And I'll tell you this as they get bigger and they get driver's licenses I can't always be there. Once you got five kids with five driver's license, they need to make decisions. Once they get married, they got a new family they gotta make some decisions. If the only way the child's life works is if you are their Lord and savior, the Lord who rules over their life and the savior who shows up to fix their life it's only a matter of time before their life is ruined anyways. In the meantime, they're gonna ruin your marriage. "Cause you're gonna spend all your time rescuing them rather than building the relationship with the spouse that God intended for you. And I find it, this is where I go from preaching to meddling. As kids get older, you need to back off, need to give them some space, need to teach them to hear from the Lord, to pray. And occasionally, you

know what they're gonna do, they're gonna make a bad decision. Just like you did. And God will be faithful to them as He was faithful to you. Do I want your kids to self destruct? Yes or no? No, I'm the guy who voted for the water slides. I'm for your kids having a good time. But what happens oftentimes with parents when they're little we're very active and as they get bigger we can't leave some room to let them grow up and make their own decisions. This is classic over parenting of adult children. It's codependency, it's enabling and it is impacting their maturing. Part of the reason these boys are immature they're over parented. Dad is trying to set up everything for his son. Mom's trying to set up everything for her son. And the question is, do you boys have your own plan, right? If you're a grown man and you're like, what is your plan? Whatever mom says, that's not a good plan. True. What's your plan? Whatever dad says. That's not a good plan. Not only are mom and dad not seeking the Lord's will neither are their sons. Where do you think they learned that, from their mom and dad. If mom and dad were seeking the Lord's will, they could teach the kids to seek the Lord's will and then the whole family could walk in the will of God instead mom and dad don't trust the Lord so mom and dad try and be the Lord. And let me say this in Christian parenting, I'm way off my notes, but this is where parents get very legalistic and high control. And they just think if I have more rules and more control, I'll have better children. I've been doing this job long enough I've never seen that happen. I've never seen legalistic, fear based, high control parenting lead to mature godly children who have healthy relationships. Never seen it. Never seen it. We get the most controlling for and legalistic of the people we love the most. We love our kids, amen. We love our kids and here's the problem. We tend to over parent especially as they get older, that's what's happening. Parenting makes things better, over parenting makes things worse. And then another parenting lesson, covert family systems are corrupt family systems. A covert family is a corrupt family. Is this an overt or a covert family? Super covert. Dad's like, Esau come in here and shut the door. What do you wanna talk about dad? Don't tell mom, don't tell your brother. Hey, I got this little plan. I'm gonna set you up son, I prefer you. Mom's at the door with a glass. Come here boy, come here. They're setting it up, they're setting it up. Oh, well we could trick them. But I got a plan just do what mom says. All covert. Mom and dad aren't talking, brothers aren't talking, very covert. If you have a covert family system, you have a corrupt family system. But oftentimes this is what happens. You're married I didn't know you had that bank account, I didn't know you had that credit card, I didn't know you were doing that. I didn't know... I don't know what's going on. Well, we don't... We just you do you and I do me and eventually we do disaster. If you are a person who is hiding things from your spouse, sneaking, trying not to get caught, being very covert, let me just tell you, it's a corrupt family system. The Bible says to walk in the light as he is in the light. See, we put things in darkness, that's covert. We bring things into the light, that's overt. This whole family's got a... There's a lot of stuff that dad's trying not to let mom know mom's trying to not let dad know and the brothers don't want the other parent or sibling to know, complete covert family system. But don't raise your hand if you're with your mom. But how many of you grew up in a very covert family system? You're like, I didn't know what was going on. Everything was in the dark. Like I don't know what we made, I don't know where dad worked, I didn't know what we were doing, I don't know what was going on. Everything was a secret. And if you did find out, they'd say don't tell anybody, but here's what's going on. Here's some personal lessons from the story. God wants us to not just hate the consequences of the sin, but

to hate the sin. So as Jacob is getting ready to go in and trick his dad, which is just unbelievable horrible thing to do. Does he hate his sin or does he hate the possible consequences of his sin? Just the consequences. He doesn't say, mom, I can't do that. That would be a sin against God. And mom I'd be lying to dad and I'd be stealing from my brother. Mom, I'd be knocking out a huge list of commandments, right? I'm not honoring the Lord. I'm not honoring and obeying my father. I'm bearing false witness and lying and I'm stealing. Like there's only 10 and I'm making my way down the list very quickly. He doesn't say that what he says is, I'll do it. But what if I get caught? What are the consequences. You and I all hate the consequences of our sin God wants us to also hate the sin. I hate that that happened, do you hate what you did? No, I just hate the pain that it cost. Another personal lesson. Romans 14:23 says, whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. Are there decisions proceeding from faith? Not at all. Lord, what do you want? Okay, that's what we're gonna do. Family meeting guys, mom and dad fasted and prayed. The Lord spoke we believe this is God's will. You're adults, you're grown men, we need you to fast and pray confirm God's will, God could speak to all of us and then in faith we'll proceed together in the will of God. None of that. None of that. And here's the last one personal lesson. The means do not justify the ends. Question. Did God already say which of these two sons should be the leader of the next generation? He did. I'll read it to you again. Genesis 25:23 God spoke to the mother. "The Lord said to her, Two nations in your womb, 'two people from within you shall be divided. 'The one shall be stronger, that's Esau 'and the older shall serve the younger, that's Jacob.'" God already told him there's two boys in your womb but I'm gonna work through Jacob. He's gonna be the one who's gonna be the leader of the next generation. Do they know who's supposed to be the one to get the blessing? Yes. Is the way that the blessing is given to Jacob a means that justifies the ends? No, this isn't. We can do this all the time. We can justify in our own mind that the means justify the end. Well, I know we lied to dad, we sort of tricked him and were deceptive, but God said it was supposed to go to you son so I'm just serving the Lord. Just do God's will. Yeah, your Lord we did it, we got your will. Not that way. It's not just what we do, but how we do it especially involving decisions regarding our children and our future. You and I can do this all the time. And we do this all the time. Let me say this in every one of us, there's a little invisible attorney that lives in our heart and whatever we want to do it comes up with a really good case to justify it. Well, you shouldn't steal, but actually you should receive that from your boss and they're not paying you so technically they're stealing from you. So technically if you take it, you're not stealing. We do this all the time. So what we've seen starts with the vision leads to deception. Here's what happens next, devastation. Genesis 27:30-46. "As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, "when Jacob had scarcely gone out "from the presence of Isaac's father, "Esau's brother comes running in the house from hunting "fires up the kitchen, prepares the delicious food, "brought it into his dad, said to his dad, 'Let my father rise and eat of his son's game that you may bless me.'" This is awkward, right? Jacob's in the other room with his mom. These are those incredibly awkward family moments. I mean, just think... Can you guys see it just for a moment? Here's... I mean, Esau comes in the house. Jacob's probably like, I gotta get the fur off and get rid of his clothes and mom's like, gosh, there's a lot of dirty dishes in the sink. Mom like well I have no idea. Oh, you're gonna make stew, good. Well, it already smells like stew, that's weird. Well, that is weird. We got some stoop . I mean, it's just a weird, it's a weird... I mean you've had those moments in your family you walk in you're like this whole

thing's weird. That's where they're at. His father Isaac said to him, who are you? He answered, I am your son your first born Esau. Then Isaac has a panic attack. He trembled very violently. The old man is having a panic attack. Somebody lied to me. I've worked my whole life to give a blessing and I was gonna give it to my son and I didn't give it to my son and I'm half blind I don't even know who I gave it to. "And said, 'Who was it then that hunted game 'and brought it to me and ate it all before you came 'and I blessed him?'" Who did I just give the whole family to in the business? Villain, the promised land. I just gave him the nation of Israel. It's kind of a loss. Yes, and he shall be blessed. Once a blessing is given it's irrevocable. He can't take it back. "As soon as Esau heard the words of his father, "he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry." Esau breaks. He's a tough guy, man's man, redheaded, hunter, fighter and now in the house, you can hear him bawling. Let me say this. When you hear an alpha strong man's man weeping uncontrollably, that sound haunts an entire house. It echoes through every room. It broke him. He's not a great guy but he is a human being and his brother just broke his soul. Esau said, bless me even also my father. What he says is we can't reverse the blessing but give me an additional one. But he said your brother came deceitfully figured it out. I kinda had a suspicion and he has taken away your blessing. Let me say this. I just kinda think of this and maybe it's the Holy Spirit you can confirm or deny. Some of you feel like your siblings stole a parent from you. Some of you feel like a sibling stole a parent from you. That's what he's feeling. Esau said is he not rightly named Jacob which means or sounds like the Hebrew word for trickster. He's a con man for he has cheated me these two times. We're gonna revisit that. He didn't really cheat him two times he cheated him once. He took away my birthright and he didn't really do that. You gave it to him and behold now he's taken away my blessing, that is true. He did steal the blessing. Then he said, have you not reserved a blessing for me? "Isaac answered said to Esau, 'Behold I have made him Lord over you.'" What's done is done son. He's in charge. When I'm gone he's the head of the next generation of the family and the ministry and the business. "And all his brothers I have given him for servants "and with grain and wine I have sustained him." He's gonna get the inheritance, the land, the business, the ministry. What thing can I do for you my son, I gave him everything. "Esau said to his father, 'Have you but one blessing my father. 'Bless me even me also, oh, my father' "and Esau lifted up his voice and he wept." He wept. Esau doesn't care about God but he does love his dad. He doesn't care about giving away his birthright but he's broken over losing his blessing. "That Isaac's father answered and said to him, 'Behold away from the fatness of the earth 'shall your dwelling be 'and away from the dew of heaven on high". This is more of a prophecy. "By your sword you shall live." You're gonna have a hard life son, you're gonna have to do a lot of fighting. "You shall serve your brother," I know that's not what you wanna hear. "When you grow restless, "you shall break his yolk from your neck." A lot of your life is gonna be in conflict but there will be a day of resolution and release. Now Esau, what's the word,

- [Congregation] Hated.

- Hated. This is bitterness, this is vengeance, this is a murderous spirit in the heart. This is where Satan gets a foothold in a family. When there's hatred, bitterness, vengeance, unforgiveness, and plotting from a murderous heart that gives an opportunity for the evil one

because of the blessing with which his Father had blessed him and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are approaching, "then I will." I'm gonna kill my brother. He makes an inner vow. As soon as dad's gone, I'm murdering my brother. I don't want my dad to have to deal with that pain so I'll just wait. If I'm gonna get up every day and sharpen my sword, make my plans and the day that dad dies, that's the day that I'm gonna slip my brother's throat, but the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebecca, she's still eaves dropping. She can protect her boy. So she sent and called Jacob, her younger son. What's crazy is she doesn't talk to her husband. Husband, we have a problem. One boy's gonna kill the other. She doesn't talk to her husband. She doesn't talk to her God. She doesn't even try and deal with the boys. She just sets her son aside, "Behold your brother Esau comforts himself "about planning to kill you." If you ask Esau, "So how are you dealing with this?" He's like, "Well, I've got something "that makes me feel better. "It's my murder plot." Okay, let me say this. When someone's pain is your pleasure you're in a dark place. You're like, you know what? They really hurt me and what makes me feel better is thinking about them hurting. If their pain causes your pleasure, you're in a dark place. Now, therefore my son obey my voice, just do what mama says. I'm a over parent. If I was the son at this point, I would say, I don't feel like doing what you say has worked out that great, but here's the big idea. Mama is still in control. She's still domineering, overbearing, high controlling, and demanding. "Arise, flee to Laban in my brother and Haran "stay with him a while." Let's get the extended family involved. If you have a crisis in your family, then you run to your extended family until your brother's fury turns away, until your brother's anger turns away from you and he forgets what you have done to him. Is that ever gonna happen? No. Oh, he'll forget. No, he won't, mom. "Then I will send and bring you from there." She's still in charge, over mothering, over parenting, high control. She loves him, but she's not helping him. Mothers, I know you love them, but are you helping them? Why should I be bereft of both of you in one day? He's gonna kill Jacob and then he's gonna be up for murder. I'm gonna lose both sons then Rebecca said to Isaac, "I love my life." Okay, let's just unpack this. I'm not even gonna say this 'cause it's just too fraught with peril. But ladies, if she hates her life who might be at least partially responsible for this conclusion? She's gotten her way and she hates it. Just 'cause your life is painful doesn't mean the horrible things have been done to you. Sometimes horrible things have been done by you to you. "I loathe my life because of the Hittite women." These other women are horrible, not like me. Isn't it weird she's pretty religious. This is the plank spec game. I'm a really godly woman. These other women, ah, they're terrible. "If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these, "one of the women of the land, "what good will my life be to me?" What she's saying is, I want my son to marry someone just like his dear old mom, Esau and Rebecca see themselves as victims. Are they? The truth is this, all of us in our life were a little bit of victim and a little bit of a villain, Esau gave his birthright he was a villain. Jacob stole his blessing that made him a victim. There are things in our life that we are the villain and there are things in our life where we are the victim. Here's what tends to happen. We tend to think that we're always the victim. Rebecca thinks the same thing. My life is terrible. What she doesn't think is, and I have caused much of my own pain. Sometimes when we are hurting, we're very good at blaming and excusing. So then it leads to family dispersion. "Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him. 'You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women.'" Now he's not supposed to marry an unbeliever 'cause now he's gonna be the next generation of the family

and if him and his wife don't love and serve the Lord, everything comes to an end. We're not gonna get the Old Testament, we're not gonna get the prophets. We're not gonna get the nation of Israel. We're not gonna get the Jewish people. We're not gonna get Jesus Christ the Son of God, we're not gonna get the crucifixion. We're not gonna get the resurrection. Ah, don't marry the wrong woman. Most important decision you make is who your God is. Second most important decision is who your spouse is. "Arise, go to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel "your mother's father and take as your wife from there "one of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother." That dude is a bad dude. They get the extended family involved and sometimes the extended family is more nasty. That's where you learn it. "God almighty bless you and make you fruitful multiply you "that you may become a company or a congregation of peoples. "May he give you the blessing of Abraham to you "into your offspring with you "that you may take possession of the land "that's the promised land of your sojournings "that God gave to Abraham, "thus Isaac sent Jacob away." Last line, "He went to Paddan-aram to Laban, "the son of Bethuel the Aramean and the brother of Rebecca, "Jacob and Esau's mother. "Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob "and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take away from there "and he blessed him and he directed him, "You must not take away from the Canaanite women." Don't marry an believer, son whatever you do, we got a lot of problems that's gonna make it even worse. "And that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother 'and gone to Paddan-aram. "So when Esau saw that the Canaanite women "did not please Isaac's father, Esau went to Ishmael." That was the son born to grandpa's girlfriend. This is gonna... This is not gonna make it better. You know like our family's having problems. Let's go get grandpa's, you know, girlfriends, kids, grandkids marry them, that'll fix it. "Esau went to Ishmael took as his wife. Besides the wife he's already a polygamous with unbelieving wives and Esau was like, "I'm gonna go get another wife, I'll fix it." "Mahalath the daughter of Ismael, Abraham's son, "the sister of Nebaioth." You hate this sermon, right? I get to spill it. Like everybody's like, I want my tithe money back. I want a refund. How many of you... Some of this is just sort of wrecking your soul right now. I'm feeling. You're like, gosh, this feels like my crazy family. There's favorites and division and covert and intrigue and conflict and then we tap in the extended family. Get grandma and grandpa involved. Get the aunts, uncles, cousins involved, get everybody and it gets crazier. What's crazy here is, the kids don't hate their parents. Who do they hate, each other. This is what happens. Parents have dysfunctional marriages. It leads to dysfunctional families and the kids grow up and they still love their parents, but they hate each other, but it's because of the environment that they were raised in. It was division that started with the marriage and came to the children. And what happens is, reality comes eventually. What mom and dad are trying to do is they're trying to resist the character of their old sons, but eventually reality comes, Jacob moves away. Do you know how long he's gone for? 20 years? He doesn't see or speak to his brother for 20 years. Some of you're like I'm writing that down. That's a great idea. See, we'd like to say, well, just give it some time. I'm sure it'll figure itself out. Sometimes it doesn't. Mom who... Rebecca who loves her baby boy, Jacob, she can't live without him, center of her world, apple of her eye. Never sees him again for the rest of her life. And what happens is, he is a trickster. Where did he learn that? Where does Jacob learn how to manipulate and control?

- [Congregation] .

- From his mom. Do you know who's even better at it than his mom, his uncle Laban, he just got sent to Laban Laban is gonna work him, manipulate him, control him, and wreck him for 20 years. The point is this, sometimes the problem is a generational sin and when you get the extended family involved, you don't make it better. You make it worse. The only thing worse than a controlling manipulative son is a controlling manipulative mother, but the only thing worse than that is a controlling manipulative uncle who is varsity and works you for 20 years. That's what happens. They don't go to the Lord, they go to their family. Let me say this. If you have a godly family, great. If you don't, don't just go to family, go to the Lord. So is there any hope?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- Nope, we're gonna collect an offering and hand out handkerchiefs. There is hope. So let me say this, as you're reading the story and I am nearing my conclusion perhaps. As you read the story what's gonna happen is these are real people and real characters and real life and real marriage and real family and real legacy and real pain and real trauma and real hardship and real confusion and it hits real close 'cause our families oftentimes are quite similar. So to get the most out of the story and or into the story, if you identify with Esau and some of you will, you're like, gosh, I'm kind of strong-headed, loud mouth and , I don't really care about the Lord. Maybe I did come from a believing family and you know, I've made some dumb decisions. It's not too late for you. All right, the God who was there for Abraham and Isaac is there for Esau. It's not too late for you. Jesus Christ will forgive you right now. He'll take you right now. It doesn't matter what family you came from, Jesus Christ becomes your big brother who saves you from sin, adopts you into a new family where God is your father and you get a fresh start as a member of a brand new family. It's not too late for you. Some of you, you identify with Jacob. You're like, I'm kind of sneaky , good at getting my siblings in trouble and I was the favorite of one of my parents and I manipulated and used that to my advantage. He's gonna grow and mature and you can too. He doesn't start in a good place, but he does make progress. And you could say, you know what? I gotta own some stuff. I gotta apologize for some stuff. I gotta repent at some stuff. I gotta grow up, be an independent adult, make my own decision. Some of you are gonna identify with mom in the story like, I'm high controlled, domineering, overbearing, a bit religious and always trying to work out the outcome that I want, need to repent of that and trust the Lord, need to apologize for that and own that. And some of you will identify in this story with dad and say, you know what? I need to apologize for playing favorites. I need to bless all my kids. One of the most powerful things you can do as a parent is just sit your kids down and say, "I sinned and I'm sorry." And these are the things that I wish I would've said or done differently and I'm asking for your forgiveness and I'm also opening my ear and my heart to ask you how I have hurt you and how I could apologize to you so that I could heal you, so that the best version of you could live in the future. One of the most powerful things we can do as a parent is not pretend that we're perfect, but to acknowledge and accept that we're not and we make mistakes and we fail. But here's the good news. There are two things here that God demonstrates, grace and sovereignty. God's grace is in this family. Do they need God's grace? Yeah. Do you? Yeah. Their

marriage needed it. Our marriages need it. Their parenting needed it. Our parenting needs it. There is grace, forgiveness, love, mercy. God hangs in there. God treats everyone in the story good even though no one in the story acts good. That's the goodness of God. And God's sovereignty is over it. He's gonna work it out. He's gonna figure it out. He's gonna straighten it out. It's gonna take a while. Come back, read ahead, the story does get better, but let me tell you this. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is Jesus Christ. He forgives us. He blesses us. He puts grace on us. He doesn't grow weary or tired of us. He doesn't betray us. He doesn't turn His back on us and it doesn't matter what we have done, He is sovereign over our lives and He finds a way to bring good even out of that which is the most despicable and reprehensible.

Father, I thank you for an opportunity to teach. I just sense a particular heaviness of spirit in the room. God, thank you that we got a little fun at the beginning, a couple of jokes, but God things took a turn that I wasn't anticipating or expecting, but Holy Spirit, I'm going to assume that we've landed in the place that you want us to be. Holy Spirit, would you reveal to us the bitterness or hatred that we have toward family members, the murderous spirit in our own heart that we would forgive and put grace on them as you put grace on us. God, would you convict us of the people that we need to just say, I'm sorry, that was wrong. I ask your forgiveness, I do apologize. And God, would you allow us to walk in grace, would you allow us to decide in faith, would you allow our marriages to be unified and not divided? Would you allow us to parent, but not overparent and would you allow us in every single way, in every single day to just find your will and walk in it and God, for the times that we haven't, we say, we're sorry and we come to meet with you. Now, Holy Spirit, I just believe that this is a sacred moment. This is where you wanna do some generational healing. You want to unburden some people. You want to bring them into reality. You want them to know the heavenly Father's heart toward them. So Holy Spirit is we come to worship, would you come to minister to us and to meet with us and to heal us so that we could have a life that we enjoy and a legacy that we leave in Jesus' good name. Amen. So Pastor Brandon was gonna close, but I feel like I should. Everyone in the story felt exactly something that you felt as we studied their life together. You could feel the heaviness in the room and I don't want it to be a spirit of condemnation, but a spirit of conviction and conviction can get us out of the place that we find ourselves into the place that God would have for us. Condemnation causes us to remain in the broken place where we find ourselves feeling shame or loss or hurt. I don't want you to stay there. It's fine to visit there, but you cannot allow Holy Spirit conviction to be used of the enemy to bring condemnation. There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ. And so let me tell you this, the sermon went a little different than I thought that it would, but here's what's on my heart. No one in the story talked to the Lord about what they were doing or how they were feeling. No one did. That's what I want you to do. I want you to talk to the Lord about what you've been doing and how you've been feeling. The husband and the wife, they didn't have a conversation. If you're married, guess what? Now you're gonna have an awkward conversation on the way home and it's gonna be the beginning of some healing in your marriage and family. In addition, the siblings didn't forgive one another. I want you to do that before you go. Prayer team is in the back. I'll invite the staff to join and expand that team. We wanna pray for you before you go. But as the spiritual father of this house, I'm gonna pray a blessing over you, Father God, I thank you for the power of a father's blessing. I thank you, God, that you are a father who doesn't bless one or some of your children,

but you bless all of your sons and daughters. I thank you, Lord God, that you are a father who does not play favorites, that you love each of us with a full wholehearted eternal devotion. Father, I thank you that you're not a father who just lets us make mistakes that you sent our big brother Jesus to get involved. Jesus, we thank you that you're better than Jacob and you're not like Esau. You're perfect and good. Jesus, we thank you that you heal us from our wounds, that you forgive us of our sins, that you lead us and guide us into a better future. We thank you that you cause us to be adopted into the father's family where we have the full sonship rights of inheritance. There are no second class citizens in the Kingdom of God. There are only sons and daughters who are fully and totally loved. God, I pray that you would break any generational curses that are causing these people to carry forth wounds from their past or bad precedents and patterns from their parents. I pray against the enemy, his servant their works and effects. I pray for their legacy. I pray for their eternity. I pray for their children. I pray for their grandchildren. I pray for their deliverance. I pray for their encouragement and I pray it in the name of Jesus Christ in whose name we pray. Amen.