

Last week we had a look at Jacob and his dysfunction.
We saw that Jacob is an example of a person facing the...

Pain of Aloneness

Having been designed and created for intimate relationship with both God and Others, I yearn for such a relationship, I feel the frustration of my inability to experience such a relationship and I act out to hurt and to carry hurt through the relationships I do have.

Jacob... "grab the heel"

Israel... "struggles with God"

This is God's invitation to struggle with your relationship with Him

I just laugh when I hear people say...

- I cannot believe because I have too many questions
- Unlike others I really struggle in my relationship w God

And you know what?

You're not always gonna get it right

2 fatal errors....

1. to give up and become critiques of those who get it wrong or mess up trying
2. become one of those who think they got it the way its suppose to be

We are looking at 2 examples

Jacob

So we ask: is this pain only evident in dysfunction

Quote... (search for life... page 7-10)

Our second example is not dysfunctional

Jesus

We are looking at 4 principles...

- Our struggle in aloneness is like a wrestling match
- Our struggle in aloneness is with God AND man
- Our struggle in aloneness inflicts wounds which may not go away
- Our struggle in aloneness will bring blessing

Remember: not asking did Jesus get lonely

Did Jesus struggle in relationships which are described as "pain of aloneness"

Luke 5:16

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

One of those lonely places was the Garden of Gethsemane in which Jesus struggled with aloneness in the same way we see Jacob struggling.

- Our struggle in aloneness is like a wrestling match

Last week we saw Jacob physically wrestling w a man.
We see Jesus in a wrestling match.

Luke 22:44-46

And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

- Our struggle in aloneness is with God AND man

Jacob remember struggle with this man who was also described as God.

In fact, Jacob is blessed with the words: you have struggled with God and man.

Did Jesus struggle with both man and God?

We know that Jesus struggled with his disciples... fell asleep, betrayed him and denied him 3x, the rest abandoned him.

I would like you to stop for a moment and contemplate what Jesus might have felt during these hours.

Imagine your best friends, your best students, the people you've invested your life into... all of them... just letting you go through the most difficult period of yr life, alone...

Luke 22:31-32

"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

What about struggling with God

Mark 14:33-36

He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

You can hear the pleading in Jesus' voice to His Abba, Daddy, father. But it seems that his pleas are falling on deaf ears. He is really struggling.

But we see this struggle deepest on the cross.

Matthew 27:46

About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Jesus is not lonely on the cross. He is alone. His disciples have turned their back. Now he feels the Father turning away.

This word, forsake, is used to describe the soul left or abandoned to hell... We know what an awful thing that must be...

2 Timothy 4:16

At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them.

On the cross, Jesus, for the very first time, experiences a break in relationship with the Father. I would suggest he felt the initial break as He came to earth. But the break was complete as Jesus bears our sins and feels the weight of the pain of aloneness. Its what we feel.

Psalm 88

- Our struggle in aloneness inflicts wounds which may not go away

Did Jesus have wounds and scars?

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

John 20:27

Jesus wounds become reminders of God's faithfulness

I think Jesus sympathizes with us, now.

- Our struggle in aloneness will bring blessing

The resurrection of Jesus and His return to the Father.
He is restored...

Philippians 2:9-11

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This is Acceptance, Belonging and Worthy.

The pain of aloneness is part of our lives

-we will struggle like a wrestling match in relationships

-we will struggle with both our relationship with God and our relationship w others

-we will carry scars with us, some of which may never heal, but which will remind us of the closeness of God.

-because the blessing is that we are accepted, we belong and are worthy...