**02062022sm.mp3**

[00:00:05] We're in Genesis Chapter 25. We're going to start in verse 21 if you have your Bibles, Genesis Chapter 25, verse 21. The Bible says no, Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife because she was barren. And the Lord granted his plea and Rebecca, his wife, conceived, it should sound familiar to you. But the children struggle together within her, and she said, if all is well, why am I like this? So she was smart. She went to inquire of the Lord and the Lord said to her, By the way, God does not always do this. He doesn't always tell us why, but he did for her. Two nations are in your womb. Two people shall be separated from your body. A one. People shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger. So there's a real present reality that has distinct purpose. So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed, just like God said, there were twins in her womb and the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over, like a little monkey. So they called his name Esau. Esau in Hebrew means hairy. So not a lot of creativity in there in creating their names. Afterward, his brother came out and his hand took hold of Isa's heel, so his name was called Jacob or supplant or heel catcher. Or, you know, there are a lot of different ideas as to what his name means. Isaac was 60 years old when he which excuse me, Isaac was 60 years old when she bore them. So the boys grew and he saw they grew really differently. Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a mild man dwelling in tents, and Isaac loved Esau because the aid of his game.

[00:01:55] We're going to talk about Isaac's downward spiritual trajectory next week. But Rebecca loved Jacob, so a lot of dysfunction in this family. A lot of favoritism for the kids between the parents. Now, Jacob cooked a stew and Esau came in from the field. We're talking two years down the road here, and he was weary, and Esau said to Jacob, Please feed me with that same red stew for I'm weary. Therefore, his name was called Edam. But Jacob said, Sell me your birthright as of this day. This was a huge deal. And Esau said, Look, I'm about to die. So total exaggeration. He gets like, you guys get when, you know, hangry, like you think the world's going to end because you missed a meal, I think that was probably Esau. Look, I'm about to die. Some of you are hangry right now. So what is this birthright to me? Right? This is a total expression of his spiritual shallowness. The Jacobs's swear to me is of this day. So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob, and Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils that he ate and drank a rose and wed. Then this is like the punctuation point on this story. Does Esau despised his birthright? Father, thank you. Thank you, God. Thank you for communion with you. Thank you, God, for the proximity that we have with you. That you dwell in us. God, you dwell in us. You speak to us. You love us. God, we have experienced your closeness in our time of worship and communion. And we pray God, that our ears now would be inclined that they would be turned upward to hear your voice. God, that that we would be in the disposition that whatever you declare to us, whatever God you rightfully demand, because your God, we would yield God, you'd find no resistance in our heart.

[00:04:03] God, no hesitancy to obey. God, we pray that you would have your way with us now so that you can bring that new work that you've longed to bring into our lives and into our families and into this culture in Jesus name. Amen, you can have the seat today. I was saying hello to. A friend the other week, and, you know, just what's up. And he responded to me with this phrase, I'm sure you've heard of before. I said, Hey, how are you doing? He's like living the dream, living the dream. You guys say that living the dream. Well, it caused me to pause and to ponder a little bit. And I'm like, Whose dream is he talking about? You know, whose dream is he talking about? What image, what image when he thinks about living the dream in this life and what his life means, what image does he have in his mind? Right? Because I do think that that we all carry this idea of what we think life is supposed to look like, what life is supposed to be when we think about the dream. And I'm not just talking about like the American dream, I'm talking about what we dream in our in our own lives. You know, in our minds what we are hoping our lives are going to be like. You know, all of that, I think in our culture has become very complicated because some of those ideas aren't just birthed within. Some of those ideas are impressed upon us by the culture that we live in. And I'm not today just saying to you that everything about our culture is absolutely bad and negative. I'm not saying that today. That's not the framework for this message, but there is there are a lot of things in our culture that are just frankly not spiritually helpful, not helpful to our walk with the Lord.

[00:05:55] And the reality is we live in a culture that is impressing upon us its ideas of what life should be like, what life should look like. And sometimes we don't realize how much we're influenced until things don't go our way. You know, until that idea that we have this picture, this dream, somehow, you know, as a Christian, somehow God's not fulfilling that God's not meeting that something is broken. And then all of a sudden we're confronted with in that moment of of adversity or pain, because sometimes it's painful. We're confronted with this, well, wait a minute. You know something. This isn't the way it's supposed to be, right? This isn't the way it's supposed to be. Well, what supposed to be are you talking about? You know, I'm not a neuroscientist. But I want to talk about neuroscience just for a minute today, because whether you realize it or not, the culture around you is influencing the way you think about your life and about the image that you should have for your life. Neuroscience has proven that our brains change as they respond to incoming stimuli. So every single day with sights and sounds and feelings and experiences and content that you take in conversations that you have, your brain is physiologically being shaped by a process called neuroplasticity. So your brain is actually changing. It's taking shape based on the stimuli that's coming into your mind every day that's happening to you, whether you realize it or not. I mean, from your point of view and my point of view, this is an involuntary process. It's not like we're trying to make this happen, but our brains are being shaped, and neuroplasticity follows a rule called the habian and rule, which basically says because your brain is made up of neurons, neurons that fire together wire together.

[00:07:56] Yeah, exactly. Neurons that fire together wire together, and that means that the connections between neurons become more easily activated and new neurons grow when they are repeatedly stimulated in coordinated patterns, repeatedly stimulated and coordinated powders and over the process of time. If there is this consistent stimulation of your brain in a coordinated way, what happens is it forms a neurological network in your mind, therefore, and when you think about this, it's exciting and scary. Like if you have good, solid godly biblical processes that you're engaged in on a daily basis, that is an amazing thing because your mind this is Romans chapter 12 versus one or two. Don't be conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That's that's what it means. And and whether we realize it or not. Hey, this is a supernatural, dynamic work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. But it also is a process where the physiology of your brain changes as you change your appetite, as you have appetite and appetite for spiritual things, there literally is physically something happening in your brain. That's the exciting side of it. Right? But there's also a really scary side of it because your brain is being sculpted, right? Some of you are sculpting your bodies while your brain is being sculpted to, as this stimuli is strategic and coordinated. And the reality is, social media platforms take advantage of this on a daily basis. They know they know the neuroscience of what they do. They can actually show they can actually shape your brain. They can through, you know, the different mechanisms that they've created. They can sculpt your brain and influence your brain, not only physiologically, but metaphysically as well. Because when the physiology of your brain is affected, the meta physical aspect is affected as also the soul.

[00:10:06] I'm talking about the soul. Your soul. The things that you desire. The appetites that you have. Media outlets and social media platforms. And by the way, today this is not a rant. I'm not on a rant. This is reality. And I'm not just anti-media or anti social media, but I am saying to you, the reality is they know if they can get your time and if they can get your attention, they can shape your brain. And the evidence is all around us. And this may seem like an absurd example, but Rachel and I were at the beach over the last couple of days. And, you know, I mean, when someone from Las Vegas goes to the beach. You know, you are totally absorbed in that body of water because there is no water in the city that we live in, like you are absorbed in the beauty of nature. And there is a beauty to the desert. There's absolutely no doubt about it, but you go to the beach, it's like, Whoa, this is extraordinary. The first morning that we were there, I was awakened by a bird singing outside of my window. And I can't tell you the last time I remember a bird singing outside of my window in the city of Las Vegas. In fact, when we go for walks, we go on a three mile walk pretty much consistently. There's one bird. There there's that bird. And we love that bird and the birds got a beautiful song, but there's only one in that three mile walk. So we're sitting there, right, totally absorbing, taking everything in. And as we're looking around, it was extraordinary for us to see that everyone was consumed with their phones just consumed like locked in and not just taking a picture of the sunset, which of course, is something that I did, but but almost addicted.

[00:12:01] And I don't know what what it was. And I'm not making an argument against smartphones, either. But do you know this? You have to know this that our addiction to our smartphones and the content that pours into our minds on a minute by minute basis is having an influence. And the consequence is it's creating patterns in our life oftentimes that don't cause us to flourish spiritually. But in fact, can be to our spiritual detriment. I think that, you know, clearly there is an effort, there is an endeavor. It is an it is an intention of the adversary to shape us and to form us through the negative influences of the culture around us, which is why we need to be just as intentional, if not more, to counter that negative influence by establishing good godly patterns, right? And you know, what's interesting, this is kind of a different take, I will say it on this chapter. But what we see in Isaac, Rebecca, Esau and Jacob's lives are three real difficulties in life. I mean, there are three real difficulties three three moments of adversity, three real challenges that had the opportunity to develop them spiritually or to take them in the other direction. And so today, I just want to spend a minute and I want to talk about how we can overcome toxic cycles in our life, how we can break behavior patterns, maybe that we've been engaged in over the course of time. Maybe we're in a place where it's like, Well, you know, this is just the way my family's been for generation after generation. And I don't see any way around it. Well, listen, if you have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you, if you have the word of God, if you have the people of God to encourage you, then any chain of sin that has been carried from generation to generation can be broken in your life, right? And that really is the first thing that I see here, verse 21 is just so solid.

[00:14:11] Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife. Topic for another time, but when's the last time you loved someone so much? And we're moved with a burden so profoundly in their life that you pleaded with the Lord for them? Now, Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife because she was barren and the Lord granted his plea and Rebecca, his wife, conceived. So Isaac was in a situation that was not unfamiliar to him, right? This is not unfamiliar territory because Isaac had parents who were in a similar situation. Remember, Abraham and Sarah had been given a promise by God. The promise was going to be fulfilled, but for the promise to be fulfilled, they had to have a child together. And so what they did is, is they started a new pattern because there were no generations before them in their family context, at least as far as they could see that worshiped Yahweh. Their family generation by generation had been pagan and polytheistic, and so because God had given them revelation, God had spoken to them. Godhead had inserted himself into their lives. They started new patterns in their life, and one new pattern was the pattern of faith. One commentator called Abraham and Sarah the Christopher Columbus of Faith. In other words, they charted a path that you know, ultimately many people would follow. This is why we call Abraham the father of faith. And in fact, this is exactly what Isaac saw and the life of his mother and father. New patterns can be shaped by godly parents. New patterns can be shaped by God, by godly parents. And this is what what happened. Abraham and Sarah handled adversity in their lives in a way that became a pattern for Isaac to follow.

[00:16:03] Abraham and Sarah handled adversity in their lives. Right, they they were she was barren. They couldn't have children. And so they prayed and walked by faith. And the way they did that actually became a pattern for Isaac to follow. And we know that because this is exactly how Isaac approaches the similar dilemma that he has in his life. You know, I am sure that Isaac heard it over and over again from his mom and dad, you know? You know, we were old and and we couldn't Isaac, you know, we could in. And I would imagine Isaac's like, say no more. Like, I don't know. I don't even want to hear the rest of that story, right? You know, we could couldn't. But God. Right. But they got to that point where it was like there was an impossibility there. There was there was something before them that they couldn't do themselves. And so they had this but God experience. But God, you have a couple of those experiences in your life. You know where you hit a wall, where there was something that was impossible for you to do? Look, if you're a Christian, you absolutely for sure have at least one. But God experience you are living under the prince of the power of the air. You can check this out later in Ephesians Chapter two. You are a son or daughter of disobedience, a child of wrath. But God, this is how he frames it. Paul does, but God was gracious to you, and I'm sure you know that had that story had so profoundly impacted Isaac's life. It created a pattern for himself to follow. Look, we have an opportunity as we raise our kids to tell them about the stories that God has been faithful to right within our lives.

[00:17:53] You know, maybe the story is, Hey, you know your kids. You know what? There was a moment in time where mom and dad were not really getting along well, and we thought our relationship was over and we were ready to throw in the towel. But God but God. But God stepped in. Or maybe, hey, guys, you know what? Sometimes things aren't always financially easy. And in fact, there was a time where we had nothing. We were literally praying give us this day our daily bread. And in a moment, you know, God stepped in, but God provided. But God was faithful. Maybe it's an area of health. Maybe there's a bad decision because, you know, sometimes as parents, we make bad decisions. Like, maybe one or two you don't have you have to hide that from your kids. You, in fact, do your kids a favor and give them full disclosure. Hey, you know what? This was a straight up bonehead move. We didn't pray. We didn't seek the face of God. And this is the consequence, and we're not going to hide this from you guys because the truth is, we don't want you to experience the same things we experienced when we chose not to seek God's counsel. And so, you know what, you guys, we just the story is this we made some bad decisions, but God. But we recognize when we were wayward and off track and we chose to seek the Lord and then God mercifully stepped in. You guys know, relationships, issues, dead end jobs. Make sure make sure that you are sharing those stories with your kids because when you do, you are laying down a pattern, a good godly pattern for them to follow. You know, what are our kids learning from us? What are they learning from us? You are the greatest influence in the life of your child? This is true for mom and dad.

[00:19:43] This is true for a single parent. You know, from time to time, I have parents who say to me, Hey, you know what? We don't talk about faith because we don't want to force our faith on our kids. Yeah, I know that's what I say, I'm like, what, what, what Christian planet are you living on? Because that is the that is the most absurd thing. You are setting your child up for failure like you have in this in your mind that you're being totally noble. And the truth is, you're being totally foolish. You know, the reality is either the world is going to influence your kid or you are going to influence your kid. And if you're not willing to do it, the world will be more than happy to fill in the vacuum that you create. You know, there's a there is an organization that has this as kind of a motto. Whoever wants this next generation the most is going to get them. And I just want to encourage us. Let's make sure it is us. They had the same problem. This was what Isaac learned. Only God can solve the problem. And so those were the steps of faith that Isaac and Rebecca took. They prayed. They pleaded with the Lord. They learn from Abraham and Sarah. The same thing that Jude did when Jude said, now to him, who is able now to him was able. We want our kids to be able to look at our lives and say, You know what? Now to him, who is who is able dad wasn't the smartest tack in the box, right, dad? Mom and dad weren't the most capable, but we saw God working in real ways in their lives. He pleaded with the Lord set up good godly patterns in your family for your kids.

[00:21:30] You know, we were not. We were not smart. We are still parents. But when we were raising our kids, I mean, it's not like we were perfect parents, but we had patterns that we established. You know, at bedtime, we would read the word of God to our kids. We would read missionary biographies to them. We prioritize the people of God and being with the people of God. Obviously, part of that is a function of the calling that God has on our lives. But even if that wasn't the case, we want our kids to know that being in community with God's people is essential, right? It's not just a suggestion. It's essential. We prioritize the importance of prayer and the and the word of God. We've tried to live out our faith transparently and invite them into our journey. New patterns can be shaped by godly parents. The second thing today that I see also is that God starts new patterns by giving unexpected answers to prayer. God will start new patterns by giving unexpected answers to prayer, verse 22, the Bible says. But the children struggled together within her, and she said she's like, If all is, well, why am I like this? So she inquired of the Lord. So. So this was the process for Rebecca. It's like, Well, wait a minute, wait a minute, God, we couldn't get pregnant. And then we prayed. My husband pleaded. And you blessed us. I conceived. And now things are not working out like I expected. I've got this thing happening within me. There is a struggle. This is not comfortable. There are. There seems to be almost as if there's something wrong. This is not the answer to prayer that I was expecting. And God lays it out, he says.

[00:23:18] Listen, the reality is I didn't just give you one blessing. I gave you two blessings. There are two nations within you. Right? There's a real issue you're dealing with now, but there is a future purpose for it. There are two nations that are dealing that that are fighting within you. One is going to be stronger than the other. And I'm going to controversial way of culture. The older shall actually serve the younger. And so Rebecca and Isaac are dealing with an answer to prayer that was not what they expected. Can I just say to you today that not every answer to prayer turns out like we expect not every answer to prayer turns out like we expect. You know, sometimes just like Rebecca, sometimes we struggle. Sometimes the answer to prayer is uncomfortable. Sometimes the answer to prayer. Is forcing us to make a change. Sometimes they answer to prayer is painful, and it hurts. You know, we we pray for someone to be healed in and for the Christian. The opposite happens. The opposite happens. They go to be with the Lord. God brings the healing. Listen, God brings the healing, but he doesn't bring it the way that we were expecting him to bring it. Luis Palau said there are five ways that God answers prayer. He said number one is is no. I love you too much. No, I love you too much. When you get when you get a no from God. Try, try to finish that whole sentence. No, I love you too much. Not no. I'm a big party pooper. Not not. No, I'm trying to ruin your good time. But you know, God loves us. And yes, for us is as much as God's love as a no from God.

[00:25:06] The second way he answers is yes, but you'll have to wait. Yes, we don't like. We definitely don't like that one. Yes, yes. But you'll you'll have to wait. The third one is yes, but not what you expected. The fourth one is yes. And here's more We love that one. And the fifth one is yes. I thought you'd never ask which how many prayers remain unanswered because they've never been presented as a petition to the father in the first place. But I just want to just focus on that. The middle one? Yes, but not what you expected. I think of all of the answers that God gives us. Sometimes this is the hardest. Sometimes this is the most difficult when we're praying and we have an expectation and God does answer. But he answers in a way that we we were not expecting him to answer. And you know, the Bible is full of examples of people who prayed and received an answer to their prayers, but the way it rolled out was was different than what they had planned. You know, I think of Hannah and you remember hand in the Old Testament and first Samuel. She was married to Alcanna and and had two wives, Hannah and Ponina. That was a problem, OK to begin with, but that's not the problem we're focusing on right now. The other wife, Ponina, was prolific in her capacity to have children. Hannah could not have children. And so you remember she prayed and she asked God to bless her and to cause her womb to be fruitful. And God did that. God answered that prayer. But then she had to take her baby, Samuel, and dedicate him to the Lord. So she has a child with an amazing answer to prayer.

[00:26:45] And yet the priests, the high priest in the Tabernacle, is the one who ends up raising him. That must have been a difficult thing for her to handle. I think about the story of Mary and Martha, and you remember their brother, Lazarus was sick, and so you know what they did? They got word to Jesus. They were near Jerusalem. Jesus was up in the Galilee, and they got word to him because they knew they were really close to the Lord. And they knew that the Lord loved their brother, Lazarus. And they really believe that if they could just get word to Jesus that he would come immediately without delay and that he would heal their brother who was sick. Well, if you know the story in John Chapter 11, what happens is Jesus gets word, but he intentionally delays his coming. He intentionally delays his coming. In fact, he waits to arrive on the scene. He waits until Lazarus has been dead for four days. And when he arrives, you know that that the response was, Lord, if you had just been here, like what happened? Why was there a delay? Our brother is dead. What they didn't know was that Jesus was going to heal him, but the healing was going to come through resurrection. Right? And then it was going to lay the groundwork for one of the greatest things that Jesus ever said. And you said it to Martha. I am the resurrection and the life he who believes in me will never die, will never die. They didn't understand that there was a purpose in the delay and there was going to be a healing that was going to come, but it wasn't going to be in the way that they expected.

[00:28:22] I think about the Apostle Paul and, you know, he had a desire and a drive to be in Rome, to be with the people of God that had assembled together in that local church. And God was faithful to take Paul to Rome, but not the way that he probably planned. Paul didn't just take, you know, a cruise on Princess Cruise Lines to Rome. His pathway to Rome was two years imprisoned in Syria by the sea and then all of the difficulty and adversity along the way that we talked about last week and then getting to Rome and being under house arrest. Can you imagine the Apostle Paul like? I mean, the sky was just up. I mean, this in the best sense. He was a beast for the gospel. Right? I mean, he he you couldn't hold the guy back. And yet now he's he's. Literally chained to a Roman guard 24 hours a day. And yet the gospel came to Caesar's household and to the rest of that city, it came in an unexpected way. Paul's prayer was help me to finish my race well, and the way he ultimately finished his race was being decapitated by Nero. Probably not what he expected. I'm saying all of that to say to you today, sometimes sometimes God answers our prayers in ways that we don't expect. And oftentimes he does it to stir us up, to stir us up. Because you know what? Sometimes we become spiritually settled. You know, you ever have one of those coffee drinks and, you know, maybe it's got it's got sirup or whatever you like your lavender latte and the sirup starts to settle at the bottom. And so you've got a. You know, you got to stir it up.

[00:30:04] You've got to sometimes this is what God has to do to us because we become so settled and the way sometimes he stirs us up is by giving us an unexpected answer to prayer. And when we're in the spotlight, like Rebecca was in that spot, we have to trust God with the outcome. We need to remember there's a bigger picture, right? God says, Hey, listen, Rebecca, chill out. Just relax. There's the bigger picture. I've got eternal things that I'm doing, and I'm in fact in this moment that you're in. I'm in fact doing things among the nations for centuries to come. You know, stuff that you probably won't ever even see, stuff that you're not even going to be dealing with way bigger, way bigger than you can imagine. And Christian, listen, don't forget that. Don't forget it when there's an when there's a situation in your life, an answered, prayer comes in an unexpected way. You have to place it in the hands of the father and know that he knows best. There are divine, eternal things that God is working together because God, our god can multitask in marvelous ways. And you have to be in that place where you, even in the moment of pain, you've got to place it, settle in your heart and place it in his hands. And the second piece of this is also that he was doing something that Rebecca and Isaac needed to happen. He answered prayer in this way because they needed it, answered like this God. This is not an easy thing to say, but I'm going to say to you today, God will answer prayer in the way that you need most. God will answer prayer in the way that you need most.

[00:31:42] I did not say God will answer prayer in the way that you want most. I said God will answer prayer in the way that you need most, which means. Which which means in those moments, in those moments that really sincerely hurt. We need to pray to God, show me to change me. God, show me to change me, show. Show me in all of this, as is God. You're stirring stuff up as I'm being awakened to things that I didn't see before. God, as I as I'm beginning to learn that there are changes that you want to make in my life and changes that I need to make, make them so clear to me, God, that I might be able to walk in obedience. If you ask for a closer walk with God, he may lead you to a deeper place of personal brokenness. If you pray to God for his kingdom to come, he may call you to lay down your possessions if you are desiring to be more loving to people in your life. God may place unlovely people in your life un lovely people. You're like, Well, I'm not going to pray for more love then because I got enough of those. Hey, if you ask for patience. If you if you you guys, this is so funny. It's amazing how we play with theology, right? If you pray for patience, God inevitably is going to bring things into your life that are going to force you into a place where you have to wait and where you have to trust in him. God is going to take control out of your hands. God is going to pull the reins out of your hands. I've heard people say over and this was like straight up early on, like maybe the first month I gave my life to Christ.

[00:33:26] Someone said, Hey, don't pray for patience. Don't pray for patience. And then I started reading in the Bible, you know that we're to count it all joy when we go through various testing and trials knowing that the testing of our faith. What does it produce? It produces patients, and I'm like, Well, wait a minute. Why would I not be praying for something that God is planning to bring into my life anyway? I'm just saying to you, you can't escape it. You can't do reverse psychology with God, right? Oh, you know, I'm going to get God this time. I'm just not going to pray. And the truth is, God knows the thoughts in your mind. Like, You know how absurd we are. Sometimes it's better just to align yourself to the purpose and plan of God and say, You know what, God, if there's control that needs to be rested from my grasp, you know, as I'm white knuckling this issue. Show me God because I want to live with more spiritual patients. If you've been asking for a deeper repentance, God help us to ask for this. God help us to ask for this. So it's just a matter of asking or taking the opportunities to repent when those opportunities come. It's actually leading into repentance and, you know, repentance in our cultures. It's been framed so negatively, and in fact, it's not a negative thing. It is a gift. Repentance is a gift, you say, Well, how can it be a gift? The very fact that God gives us an opportunity to turn away from our sin is a gift. He doesn't have to provide that for us. If you've been praying for a deeper repentance, the truth is God may uncover something you don't want to see.

[00:35:07] God starts new patterns in our lives. God stirs us up to new things by answering prayers in ways that we don't expect. A final thing today is this I think new patterns are created by not doing what comes naturally. New patterns are created in our lives when we choose to not do what comes naturally to us. And let me just say Esau did what naturally came to him. He didn't have to do it this way, but he chose to do it this way. He despised his birthright. What was his birthright? Well, I'm going to make a distinction between birthright and blessing because there are two different things. Both of those things were rejected by Esau. The birthright was spiritual. It was the title. It was the blessing of promise. It was the inheritance of Canaan. It was a covenant relationship with Yahweh. You know, when God made his initial promise to Abraham in Genesis Chapter 12, he gave birthright and blessing. He gave material and spiritual. These came in two different ways to Esau. The spiritual came first. And what we see in this story is that there was such a supreme spiritual shallowness to Esau. He wanted nothing to do with the spiritual blessing. He had no personal value for it. The immediate gratification of his flesh was much more meaningful to him to satisfy then to taking the blessing that God desired to bring to him because he was the first born. One commentator put it like this and this is strong, and I think we need to hear it like this because this reality you saw was not only immoral, but he was also godless. He had no ethics or faith, no scruples or reverence. He had no regard for the good, the truthful, the divine.

[00:36:59] He was totally worldly, totally secular, totally profane. Now there are some people who say to me, Well, he didn't have a choice because look what God said while he was still in the in the womb, God made him that way. That's not true. The responsibility for his actions rested squarely upon his shoulders. And we know that because of what the author to the Book of Hebrews says about Esau. Now, listen, the framework is a little different because the author to the Book of Hebrews is going to give an exhortation to Christians to not be like Esau because these particular Christians were. We're turning away from faith in Christ, and they were turning back to Judaism. They were in essentially the connection here is that they were disregarding by their turning away. They were disregarding or despising the spiritual blessings that came through the cross. And so he says this to them in warning, lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright rejection number one of Esau for you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, that was the second thing that God was going to give to him. We're going to talk about that in a couple of weeks before you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing he was rejected for, he found no place for repentance. So we started diligently with tears. And so the author did it to this book. To these people is saying, Listen. Don't despise the blessings that God has brought to you through the Cross of Christ. You know, the story of Esau and Jacob is so fascinating because you have two kids that had the same opportunities with two totally different outcomes two kids with two with the same opportunities.

[00:38:49] And yet there were two totally different outcomes. And before? I apply this to the Christian life. Let me just say that apart from Christ, we are all Esau apart from Christ, we are all Esau. I think we would like to frame ourselves as Jacob, but we are. We are born in the same spiritual condition that Esau was born in. We're born without a proclivity towards God. There is no natural leaning into God because the Bible says there are none who are righteous. No, not one. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. There is no natural desire to pursue God within us. It is purely the grace of God as we respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ that he takes what was dead within us, and he regenerates it and causes it to be alive. And that and that fundamentally is where all of your appetite for spiritual things comes from. You're not naturally a spiritual person. You are naturally on spiritual until the work of the Holy Spirit occurs in your life. When you put your trust in faith, in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and his resurrection from the dead. Right. Like Jesus said, that which is dead is going to come to life. The the curse is reversed. Maybe you've never put your trust and faith in Christ, and here you are present today. Or maybe you're watching online and you know, there's something that's been happening in your life. Nothing that this world has to offer you is satisfying you. And you know, there's a real brokenness in your life that you can't fix. There are problems that you can't solve. God wants you to have a but God moment today. God wants you to come just as you are.

[00:40:36] And in all of your inabilities and all of your weaknesses. And as you put your trust and faith in Christ, he is going to turn that around and he's going to cause you to come alive. Having said that, let's just consider the case of two Christians who have the same gospel, who have the same Holy Spirit, who have the same Bible, who have the same promises of God. And yet they have totally contrasting spiritual experiences. One soars while another one crashes, one flourishes while another one languishes. What is supernaturally changed, while another one remains unchanged? How? How does that happen? How can you have two people who are Christians have two totally different spiritual experiences? I want to suggest to you that often it is because one is unwilling to break unhealthy, sinful patterns and cycles in their lives. Because because because in the process, in the process, as God is like leaning, leading us on this journey like we're supposed to be growing spiritually, I'm not saying the trajectory is always like this. Sometimes it's this and this and then this and then this and then this, right? But is progressively going towards God like C.S., Lewis said. We're going higher up and deeper in. Some of us get stunted, we get stunted because we stop. We hit something that God is saying to us, Hey, you need to lay that that down if you want to walk with me, if you want to experience me, you belong to me. That's a fact. But if you want everything that I have for you, that thing right there, that cycle needs to be laid down in your life. Maybe it is a cycle of sin. Maybe it's not sin, but you know, it's not spiritually helpful.

[00:42:30] It's not. It's not helping you grow in your relationship with God. And you know, for that person that doesn't experience the fullness of what God wants, they're they're stunted. They're stunted because they say no to God. They remain in spiritually shallow waters because they will not go any further. And honestly, you know, our flesh is so deceptive. We have all sorts of ways to justify that condition, right? Sometimes we blame it on God. Sometimes we blame it on God. We're like, Well, God, you know what? You did this to me and you made me like this, and you're not this and you're not that. You can never blame that on God. You can never blame that on God, because that is never the desire of God. God never leads us or causes us to sin or to resist him. You know, some of us today we have a stunted spiritual growth because the truth is we've just not been willing to be obedient in an area of our life. We may experience the blessing of God in other areas, but this this area remains untouched by God because we won't let him get to it. The door remains shut the door that God is calling us to open, C.S. Lewis said this, he said obedience is the key that opens every door. I love that obedience is the key. You say, Well, what is obedience like? Let's just keep it simple, is saying yes to God. It's just saying yes to God. We want to complicate it. Right. We don't have the complicated obedience is saying to God, You know what? I'm going to choose your way over my way. I'm going to choose your way over my way, God, honestly. And you can be honest with God.

[00:44:13] Honestly, God, I don't really like this because I like this thing, right? Brought probably some sense of satisfaction. And and and I like it, and I know it's not going to be easy and probably is going to be like ripping a Band-Aid away. We're going to talk about that a little bit next week. Can't wait to see you on Sunday or the week after something like that. But you know, we're willing, we're willing to align ourselves to the purposes of God because we love him. Jesus said it like this. These were final words that he said to his disciples. He said, If you love me, keep my commandments. If you love me, keep my commandments. Bad habits are broken by being obedient to God. All right. How do we know what it is that God has commanded? It's it's all in the book, right? It's all in the book. Hey, if the social media platforms and the media content and the culture has the vast majority of your time, don't expect your life to be aligned to the purposes of God because you're probably not getting as much of this as you need. Like you need to be in the book and you need to be in the book so much that the book is transforming your life. D. L. Moody Let me just wrap up with this D. L. Moody said. The Bible is not just for our information, is for our transformation. Do you believe that the Bible is not just for our information, is for our transformation, and that is true if we obey? Father, thank you so much for your word to us today and. And we receive it, God, we receive it. We believe that this is your word for our hearts, that your spirit is spoken.

[00:45:58] And so search us. Search our hearts. God. Today, as our eyes are closed and as our heads are about, maybe today you've you're living in a spiritually unregenerated condition. You've just not been alive to God. And, you know, you never will be until you put your faith in Jesus. Because God is the pathway to spiritual life. Is it through a religious ritual? It's not through you fixing yourself morally, it's not through you becoming a better person or even establishing good patterns in your life, it comes through faith in Jesus. God did for you what you never were able to do for yourself. He rescued you. He saved you. And that salvation and rescue can be yours today, if you will say yes to Christ. If you will say yes to Christ, what does that mean? The Bible says that. For God, so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son so that whoever believes in him should not perish but should have everlasting life. Today, the command of God to you is to believe, is to believe, will you take that step today? A step you've never taken before. A step that will take you into the promises of God, a step that will lead you to a life and that much more abundantly. A step that will take you into an eternal inheritance. The promise, the unchanging promise that when you die, you will be with God forever. Today, if this is you. God is giving you a command, and now you have the choice, will you? Will you say yes to God or will you say no? Will you be obedient today or will you be disobedient? Choose obedience, and in choosing obedience, you will choose life. This morning, if you want to say yes to Christ and you want to believe in him.

[00:48:24] I want to pray for you today. I'm just going to ask you right where you're sitting, would you raise your hand to stretch your hand up high? God bless you in the back today. See your hand over here on my right, in the center and in the back and here in the front right here. Thank you so much. I see both of your hands right here in the back. The center area over here on my left, thank you, thank you. He he loves you. God loves you today. You're responding to the love of God. He is reaching his hand out to you today through his son, and all you have to do is take it by faith. There's anybody else right now. Stretch your hand up high, today is your day to trust in Christ over here on my left. Thank you so much. God bless you and here in the center. And over here on my right and I see your hand to. Don't resist, you know, there may be someone here today and and week after week, look, you've been present, but. But you've been resistant to. Say yes to him. Stop resisting what is best for you. Anybody else? I see your hand, thank you. You can put your hands down today as a Christian, I want to give you this challenge. Maybe there's an area. That you need to choose obedience in. Maybe there is a thing that you've been hitting in your life is just been a roadblock, it's been a roadblock. And and the fact is this it's been self-imposed. And today he's speaking to you and and there is an opportunity for you to choose today as well, to not be like you saw who favored the fulfillment of the flash over the things of the spirit.

[00:50:27] Maybe this thing in your life is, is that maybe it's just just straight sinful. Maybe it is a pattern of something that really is spiritually unhealthy. And today, God is saying to you, Hey, if you want to go further with me, you need to say yes to me and no to this, would you raise your hand today if this is you? You need to lay that thing down today and walk with him. God bless you. Thank you over here on my left. I see your hand right here, center over here on my right, over here in the front and right here. God bless you, guys. Thank you so much for your honesty today. I see your hand. Make this your day. Make this the moment that you can look back on and sincerely say that God did a work in your life. There's a but God moment that has been prepared by the father for you. Walking that today, anybody else? Thank you. Thank you. I see your hand. Maybe as a husband and wife or as a family today, you just need to re consecrate. Your marriage in your family to the Lord. You can put your hands down, father, thank you, God, so much for the work of your spirit, and we pray today that as these take this step of faith and respond to you that, oh god, you would do what you promised to do, that you would answer prayers in unmistakable and almighty ways in Jesus name. Amen.