

These questions are for the September 20, 2026, message, “Wrestling with God.” Please read the sermon passage (Genesis 32:22-31) out loud.

Passage Outline

When we wrestle with God . . .

1. He meets us alone (22-24a).
 - a) Jacob faces a life-and-death encounter with his brother, Esau in the morning.
 - b) But God wants to wrestle with him tonight.
 - i. Meet with God alone to be sure you trust Him yourself.
 - ii. Many people refuse to wrestle with God.
2. He knows our weakness (24b).
 - a) Jacob’s biggest problem has been Jacob. He was a trickster, a “supplanter.”
 - b) God makes him admit it! “What is your name?” “Jacob, the deceiver” (27).
 - c) You and I have weaknesses and sin issues that God wants to wrestle from us.
3. He leaves a gracious mark (25-26).
 - a) God touches Jacob’s hip socket and puts it out of socket, causing a limp.
 - b) God does not wrestle with us to hurt us, but to help us.
 - i. The blessing is not the stuff, but having God Himself.
 - ii. Not the gift, but the Giver. Jacob wants the blessing, but not the Blessor.
 - c) “God fights against us with His left hand and for us with His right hand.” -Calvin
4. The change is permanent (27-31).
 - a) Name change: from Jacob, “supplanter,” to Israel, “one who strives with God.”
 - b) Jacob names the place Peniel, “face of God.” He sees God and lives!
 - c) The beauty of the poetry: “The sun rose.” It’s a new day for Jacob.
 - d) The permanent limp. It’s better to limp than be selfish / self-promoting.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: ALONE. How has God graciously isolated you? How have you sometimes resisted? In what ways have you wrestled with God alone?
2. Based on #2, above: What kinds of afflictions and straits has God brought into your life in order to confront a deeper weakness? What were those weaknesses / sins? In what ways is God gracious to do this?
3. Based on #3, above: After an encounter with God, we will limp. “It’s better to limp with God, then to walk aright in our sin.” How were you weakened by the wrestling match? In what ways do you limp? How were you strengthened afterward?
4. Based on #4, above: At 90, Jacob had lived a life of “supplanting” and deceiving. But here, he permanently learned to seek the Giver, and not the gift. In what ways has your encounter with God changed you permanently?