

Small Group Notes 06 August 2017. Theme: “Wrestling with God-”

Key Words: Wrestling, Face to Face, Truth, New Name, Transformation

Welcome

- What situations in life have had you saying “I’m wrestling”?

Worship

- Read *Psalms 145:1-10*

Invite someone to share a testimony of how they have experienced God’s mercy and steadfast love.

Sing a song of praise together.

Word

Before reading Gen 32:22-32 remind the group of the context-Jacob returning to his homeland in great distress. Fearing violence from Esau he divided his company into two groups. Then sent droves of gifts ahead of him (Gen 32:7-21).

While the passage is read invite the group to listen imaginatively – closing their eyes and picturing the scene.

This wonderful story is mysterious and speaks to us in many ways at many levels. This will be evident in the group discussion so allow God’s Spirit to speak through the diversity of ideas.

1. Spend a few moments discussing how you all imagined the scene.
2. How did the story speak to you personally?
3. How would you describe Jacob’s character? If you were Esau how would you describe Jacob?
4. Read Jacob’s prayer in Gen. 32:9-12. How does he sound? What may be changing in his character?
5. Why do you think that the man asked Jacob “what is your name”?
6. Jacob came “face to face” with God. But he also came face to face with himself-he had to say: “I’m Jacob the deceiver”. What situations in your life have brought you to admitting uncomfortable truths about yourself?
7. Jacob is blessed, but he also limps. Can suffering, sickness and struggle, in God’s power, become blessing?

Works

- As you prepare to pray for our nation ask:
- Did anyone participate in marches to Parliament during the week? In what other ways can Christians promote honesty and compassion in society?
- As you prepare to pray for one another describe this Spiritual Practise for the week (adapted from Hudson’s “Questions God asks us”) and commit to trying it:
 - During the week come to God in prayer asking God to reveal aspects of your character that you have not wanted to face. Then imagine kneeling before the cross. Jesus turns his face to you and says: “*You are God’s beloved. Look at my cross. See how much you are loved, accepted and forgiven. Your name is written in the blood of my crucified hands*”. Then, like Jacob, ask for blessing “I will not let go until you bless me”.