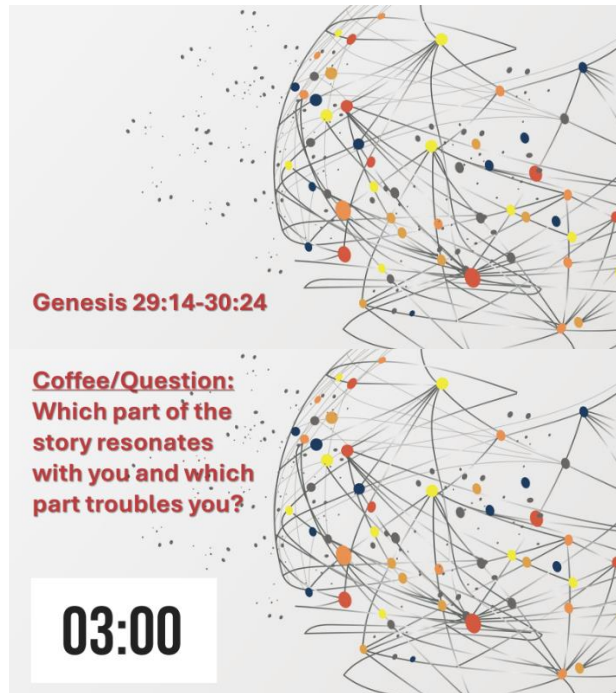


Greater Grace: Jacob's Story



Sooke Baptist Church, Sunday, October 29, 2023, 10am



Two weeks ago, we studied Leah's story.
Last week we studied Rachel's.
Today we turn our attention to Jacob.

As you heard in the reading of Scripture, the details regarding Jacob...
are surprisingly few.

There is one recorded interchange that took place between him and
Rachel when she demanded, after Leah had her fourth child... that
Jacob give her children, or she would die.

Jacob answered Rachel – “Am I in the place of God?”

Many years earlier when Jacob's dad became aware that his wife, Rebekah was barren, I remind you of what Isaac did.

Genesis 25:21
**Isaac prayed to the LORD
on behalf of his wife...
The LORD answered his prayer
and his wife Rebekah
became pregnant.**

Did Jacob pray for Rachel?

Scripture is silent.

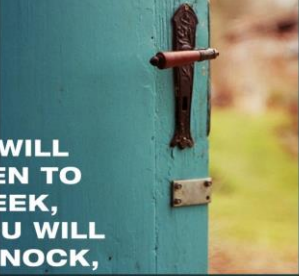
It doesn't say he did; it doesn't say he didn't.

What we do know... is what God said through Jesus' brother...

James 4:2
**You do not have
because you do not ask God.**

When you ask,
you do not receive
because you ask with wrong motives that you may
spend what you get
on your pleasures.

What we do know is what Jesus said:



**ASK,
AND IT WILL
BE GIVEN TO
YOU; SEEK,
AND YOU WILL
FIND; KNOCK,
AND IT WILL BE
OPENED TO YOU.**

MATTHEW 7:7

Did Jacob ask? Did he seek? Did he knock?

The passage is silent.

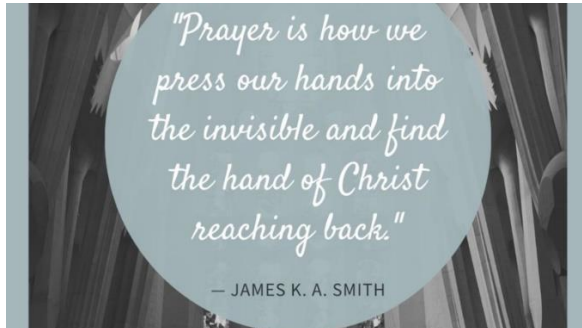
Why do the people of God pray?

It is not to inform God of something he doesn't know.
Nor is it to tell God what he should do.

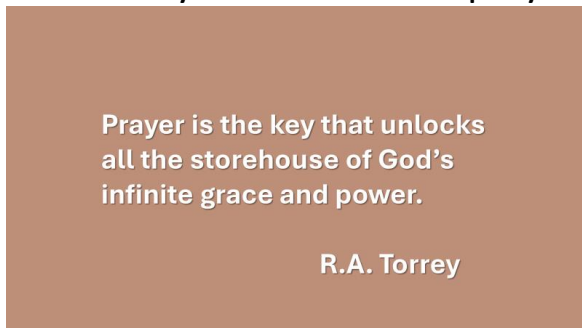
God has a plan.

In prayer his people come to terms with that plan.

James Smith wrote:



R.A. Torrey said this about prayer:



Jacob had been invited into fellowship with God when the LORD appeared to him in a dream at Bethel. Remember?

Genesis 28:13-15

There above [the stairway] stood the Lord, and he said: "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

"I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Being in fellowship with God meant that Jacob could have spoken with the LORD on behalf of Rachel.
But it appears that he didn't.

“You do not have because you do not ask.”

The God of Jacob also grants to the follower of Jesus this same stupendous privilege of fellowship:



...He welcomes us to speak with Him as a child with their father... or as a spouse with their partner.
Is that not incredible?!!!!!

What else is revealed about Jacob in this passage?

In **Genesis 30:3-8**, there is no record of Jacob's response to Rachel's proposal that Bilhah be a surrogate for her.

We are only told what he did in v.4 – “Jacob slept with her...”

In **Genesis 30:9-13**, there is no record of Jacob's response to Leah's proposal to do the same with Zilpah, except compliance.

In the rivalry between Leah and Rachel, there is also no mention of Jacob speaking to correct their voiced misconceptions about God or to attempt to reconcile the two sisters and bring peace to his household.



In these matters Jacob's silence was deafening.
But then, so also was God's.

Does the lack of commentary mean it was God's will for Jacob to do as he did?



According to this psalm... was Jacob being rewarded because God approved of what he was doing?

Or could there be another reason why God included this narrative. Did God want to communicate that in different time and different places... marriage will look different?

How are we to understand the inclusion of this narrative in the Bible?
Some stories in the Bible are told to serve as a warning.

Look at 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 10:6-11

Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry." We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died.

1 Corinthians 10:6-11

We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come.

The followers of Jesus are warned not to set their hearts on evil things.

Why?

Because Jesus has set us free from the guilt and penalty of our sin.

Because we have been adopted by God as his children.

Because the Father has given us the Holy Spirit... to set us free from the power of sin that is within us.

Do you see the great privilege the people of God have on this side of the cross and the empty tomb?

Look at the passage again.

1 Corinthians 10:6-11

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for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come.

What does that mean... “The culmination of the ages has come.”

This is the mystery... revealed in the gospel.

The Holy Spirit lives in the people of God.

We are God’s temple.

Christ in us is our hope of glory.

This is incredible news!!!

The God who makes his home in us... is the God of every grace.

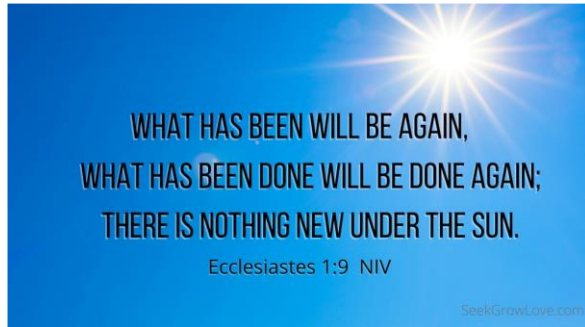
Now look at what the grace of God empowers his people to do.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind.

And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

The writer of Ecclesiastes said, 1:9...



Even 3000 years ago, it was evident that history repeats itself as subsequent generations forget what those before them did and then tragically end up doing the same.

But in Jesus and because of him there is hope.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

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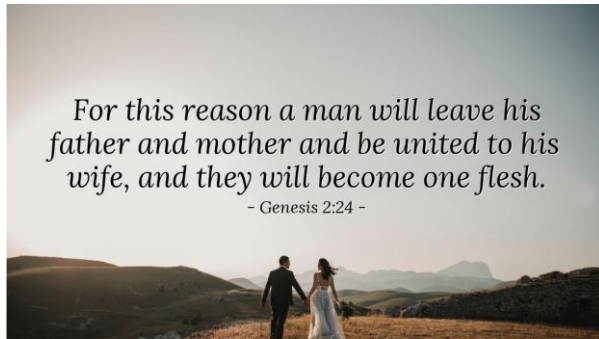
In Jesus there is a new way to live.

Jesus provides "a way out" for his people.

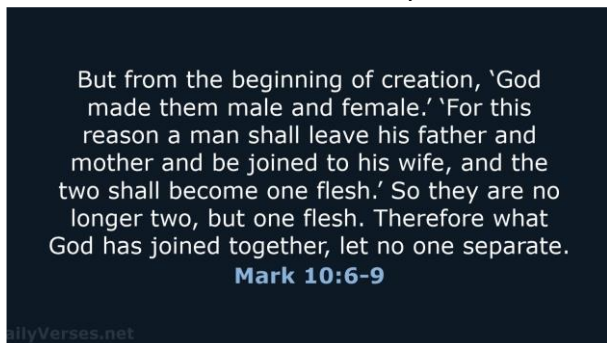
If the point of Genesis 30 is not to teach that marriage is fluid... and can look differently in different times and in different places...

...and if Jacob's marriages do not serve as an example to emulate, but rather are a warning, then we must ask – has God said what is his intent for marriage?

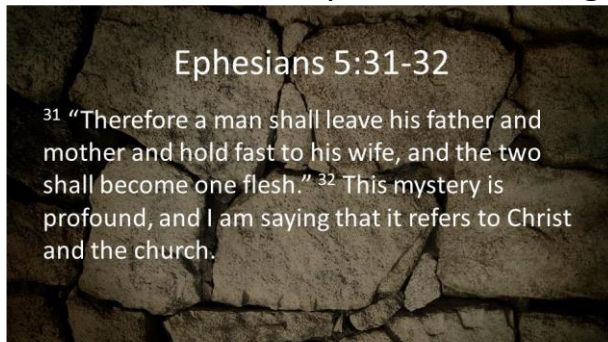
Look at Genesis 2:24.



Look at what Jesus said, Mark 10:6-9...



Look at what the Spirit said through the apostle Paul...



John Piper wrote:

When God created man and woman, male and female and then ordained the union of marriage, he patterned marriage between a man and a woman after the relationship between his Son and the church.

**This is why marriage
is a mystery.**

**God created marriage to be
in the likeness of
the Son's own eternal marriage
to his people.**

Therefore, the roles of a husband and a wife are not culturally defined or arbitrarily assigned but are rooted in the distinctive roles of Christ and his church.

In marriage the triune God grants to a husband and a wife the privilege... to image astounding divine realities which are bigger and greater and more glorious than them... the God who...

**God created male and female
in his likeness.**

**God created marriage
between a man and a woman
in the likeness of
Christ's relationship to his church.**

This is the truth which God has revealed to humankind.
His ways are the best because he is God, and he is good.

So, how then, is the church of Jesus to respond to the sexual dysfunction and confusion of our own culture?

Are we to be a shrill condemning voice?

Or are we to say nothing?

Glenn Scrivener writes:

“Our hearts genuinely go out to those who experience great discomfort with their bodies generally and their sex specifically or who are same-sex attracted. We are to care gently for these. But our caring doesn’t mean re-ordering the institution of marriage or sexual ethic.”

Glenn Scrivener believes the people of God are to be like their Savior who was full of grace and truth (John 1:14) and so speak, as he did, the truth with grace and in love.

And what is the truth?

God did not create humanity gender neutral, nor did he grant to humanity the right to define or redefine marriage according to their own wishes.

God in his wisdom instructs us in his word how to live.

In the story from Genesis 30... we are taught...it was not God’s will for Jacob to marry four women.

This was a grievous dysfunction.

But in this story, we also see how God took the brokenness of that particular family and redeemed it... to his glory.

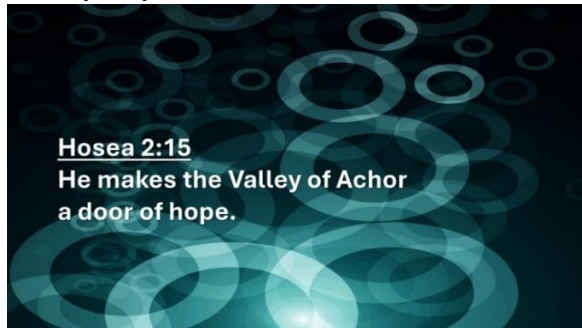
This is who the LORD is.

This is the good Father who adopts as his own all who come to Him through Jesus.

He redeems our brokenness for his glory.

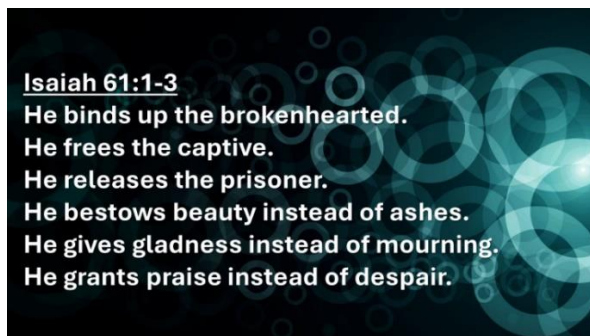
And what he did then... is what he continues to do now.

The prophet Hosea wrote...



Achor means trouble...

Only the triune God can bring hope into the places of trouble to which our sin has taken us. But how does he do this?



Our gracious triune God does not leave us in our sin but sets us free.

We see God doing this... in the story that unfolds in the book of Genesis, and throughout the entire Bible.

The LORD is the God who...



This is who our Rescuer is.

If a person chooses their sin, then they will remain a captive of sin... and the consequences of their choices will produce in them ashes and mourning and despair, both in this life and the life that follows death if it is entered into without Jesus.

This is where the current sexual revolution is taking people... to a place of ashes, mourning, despair and ruin.

But the God of every grace provides all that is necessary to save all who come to him through Jesus.

He is rich in kindness, forbearance and patience. Romans 2:4.

The intent of the LORD's kindness is to lead a person to repentance. This is why he holds his hands out, as Romans 10:21 says,



...“to people who are disobedient and obstinate.”
Is not that incredible?

If you haven't received Jesus into your life, won't you to come to him this morning.

This will require you to...

- Agree with his assessment of your sin.
- Acknowledge to him your need of his salvation.
- Express to him your belief in him.
- Invite him to be your Savior and the One in charge of your life.

Dear church, we have been reminded in this passage... not only who our God is, but who we are, we are his child, the church is his spouse.

This is the good news of the gospel.

Takeaway?