

Isaac and Rebekah

SERMON NOTES

I. Mohawks & match-making

- a. Isaac's story begins with Abraham
- b. Abraham is living into God's promise by finding a wife for Isaac that is from Abraham's country, not from Canaan where he is dwelling

II. The servant's journey (Genesis 24)

- a. The servant is completely dependent upon God
- b. **For all we do, we must depend upon God**
- c. The servant reflects on God's *hesed*, his loving kindness
 - *Hesed* entails loyalty to a covenant relationship in which the inferior partner depends on the kindness of the superior to meet desperate need.
- d. Upon success, the servant worships, framing the entire encounter in worship and prayer
 - **We must frame our days in communication with God**
- e. Isaac and Rebekah meet and are married. It's a near storybook/fairytale beginning

III. Struggle (Genesis 25:19-34, 26:34-27:46)

- a. Rebekah is childless, Isaac prays and Rebekah conceives
- b. There is struggle in her womb, which will continue to unfold in their family
 - Isaac and Rebekah pick favorites
 - Jacob weasels Esau out of his birthright
 - Esau lives in symbolic rejection of the covenant God made with Abraham, his grandfather
 - > By favoring Esau, Isaac is letting go of God's covenant promise
 - Jacob conspires with Rebekah to steal Esau's blessing, leaving Esau in a blind rage

IV. Redemption (Genesis 28:1-4)

- a. Isaac's eyes are opened, he forgives Jacob and willingly blesses him
- b. In the midst of secrecy, deception, and rage, God's purposes are still accomplished.
 - **You don't have to get rid of family conflicts before God's purposes can be worked out.**
- c. We should follow the example of Abraham's servant: **communicate**
 - With God and with each other
- d. In the middle of conflict, God's loving kindness is built on a covenant.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Sharing Life Together

1. What's the craziest and most fun hairstyle that you've had? Ever had a hairstyle you regretted?
2. What's going on in your family right now? Is there peace, conflict, numbness, etc.?
6. Isaac's lack of sight is both a physical and spiritual reality. But the events that transpire serve to open the eyes of his heart. Share a time when your eyes were opened to something important. Is there something that maybe God is trying to get you to open your eyes to right now?

For Reflection

1. In what ways are you currently dependent upon God? In what ways do you need to be more dependent?
2. In what ways has God demonstrated his *hesed* (loving kindness) to you?
3. What does communication with God look like for you?
4. In the middle of hard situations, do you feel free to react authentically? Or do you feel like you have to be more guarded? In what ways to you go "inquire of the Lord?"
5. Interpreting Rebekah's actions in the best light, she has the right values but the wrong methods. Can you relate with this?
7. Agree or disagree: My current problem(s) prevent God's purposes from being played out in my life.
 - a. Why do you agree or disagree?
8. Sealed with the blood of His Son, God has made a covenant with us that promises us life. That life starts now and lasts for ever. Do you believe God is faithful in your life to this covenant? Why or why not?

NOTES
