

Wrestling with God Almighty

Genesis 32:22-32

“Jacob’s life is the story of relentless grace – tenacious grace, contending grace, intrusive grace, renovating grace. Tenacious in that it would not let him go. Contending as it was always battling for his soul. Intrusive because it would not be shut out. Renovating because it gave him a new limp and a new name. This is the God who redeemed us. He wrestled Satan on the cross and won. He has given us new life. And now that we are his, he will not let us go. We must submit to him. We must understand with Luther: Did we in our own strength confide, Our striving would be losing.” (Hughes)

- I. The reason why some believers keep what they consider to be a safe distance from Jesus is because they are holding onto things that they are not willing to surrender to Him. It could be it a lifestyle, a relationship, porn, immorality of some type, or even a pet idol. Some even distort the character of God to say that His love accepts all no matter the sin without any judgment whatsoever against homosexuality, transgenderism, woke stuff, or progressive liberalism, all of which characterize the religion of secular humanism. It is a reasoning that thinks one can continue in whatever they feel defines who they are without any regard for what is morally right in God’s eyes. To speak out against it as believers with a biblical world view, is seen as unloving, judgmental, bigoted, and narrow minded. Yet, to remain silent in many ways condones what God clearly speaks out against through the truth of His Word.

1 Jn. 1:5-7

Matt. 16:24-26

1 Jn. 2:28-29

1 Jn. 2:28-29 *And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming. 29 If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.*

“There is so much worldliness in our work, in our churches, and in our surroundings that we have grown used to it as we think: It cannot be changed. We do not go to the Lord and ask Him about it. But my advice is that you bring everything to Jesus and say, ‘Lord, everything in my life has to be in complete harmony with you.’ Let your surrender to Christ be absolute. He will show you what is not according to His mind and will lead you into deeper fellowship.” Andrew Murray

II. We are told that no one comes to Jesus unless God draws them. In other words, God takes an active role in planting the seed of the gospel in the hearts of those He is drawing so that they might be saved. Upon salvation, He continues to play an active role in changing a believer to become more and more like His Son, Jesus Christ. Like with Jacob, He, in His grace, grabs a hold of our body, soul and spirit through the indwelling of the Spirit to wrestle from us those things that must be submitted to Him. He does that to not only set us free from their spiritually damaging influence, but also to enable us to stand firm in our love for Him. Therefore, *we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. 17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal (2 cor. 4:16-18).*

Gen. 32:22-25

2 Cor. 12:9-10

Hosea 12:2-6

Jn. 15:1-8

Jn. 6:44 *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.*

Rom. 8:28-29 *28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

*“God does not play by our rules, and he never loses. He is the sovereign God. his will is done so, whether we like the way he plays or not, God always wins the contest. If we are smart, we recognize this early and submit to him. **Boice***

III. David Guzik rightfully states, *“This is an invaluable place for everyone to come to: where God conquers us. There is something to be said for every man doing his wrestling with God, and then acknowledging God’s greatness after having been defeated. We must know we serve a God who is greater than us, and we cannot conquer much of anything until He conquers us.”* *“The goal of the Christian life can be summed up by Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Such a life of surrender is pleasing to God, results in the greatest human fulfillment, and will reap ultimate rewards in heaven (Luke 6:22-23).”* gotquestions.org

Gen. 32:25-32

Rev. 2:17

1 Jn. 2:28-29

Jacob = "heel holder" or "supplanter"

“Israel is a compound of two word: sarah (meaning ‘fight,’ ‘struggle,’ or ‘rule’) and el (meaning ‘God’). Israel mans ‘God rules,’ ‘God commands,’ or ‘God prevails.’” **Boice**

2 Cor. 12:9-10 *“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*