



GRACE IN WRESTLING

GENESIS 32:22-30

“And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.” Genesis 32: 24



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There are many ways to hide or be alone, aren't there? At first thought, some might think that hiding means getting out of sight - like in hide and seek. Others might say it is a way of keeping control of our life which, in many ways, is out of control. There is the hiding of things, and the hiding of feelings, but there is also the hiding from public awareness, right? We can do a good job of hiding our sin, too, can't we? But when we come out of the shadows and face our fears - of being known or being rejected - and come face to face with a gracious, merciful and loving God, we find that in the midst of fear there is One who stands by us with strength in our weakness. That is what Jacob realized in the story from Genesis 32. He faced his fear and wrestled with God and came out bruised but not broken; still a sinner but washed with grace.

Jacob felt alone in his fears in his desperate state of trouble with his brother Esau and his father-in-law Laban - one in front and one behind - and yet Jacob was not alone. God was present. We see the grace of God's presence as we are reminded in Psalm 121:1 “...My help comes from the Lord...” That same

God who was there with Jacob, allowing him and us to come close and wrestle with Him in our fears and troubles, is grace. God allows us to cry out to Him and ask why. Grace was also shown by allowing Jacob to prove to himself that God will never leave us. The “man,” or angel, allowed Jacob to hold him, but not hurt him, until it was time. Then the angel touched his hip - marking him forever with a reminder that he wrestled with God and God did not forsake him. How great the love of God is that He would come to us and allow us to wrestle, cry out and “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil.2:12). At the proper time, God gave Jacob the name, “Israel” and us the name “Christian.”

This Advent let us remember that God will meet us at the proper time with grace, too. Jesus came as a baby born of a woman who humbly trusted God saying, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And later Jesus said to His disciples and says to us, “Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.”

As we await His coming and celebrate this season, let us do so with humility; remembering that we are never left alone, trusting that God will meet us where we are, allowing us to wrestle with Him with all our hidden fears and sin and using those times of struggle for His glory and our good. By His grace alone - all for His glory.

Gracious Lord, when we wrestle with You and struggle and feel alone, let us remember that we never really are. We may wrestle with You at times but You promise us that You will never forsake us. Help us to seek You and follow You through all our struggles remembering and knowing that You will meet us and strengthen us in our weakness, by Your Grace, for Your Glory.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10



This Advent season, you are invited to join us in-person or watch our Sunday worship live at cspc.net/live.

8:15 + 9:30 + 11AM
Livestream at 8:15 and 11AM