



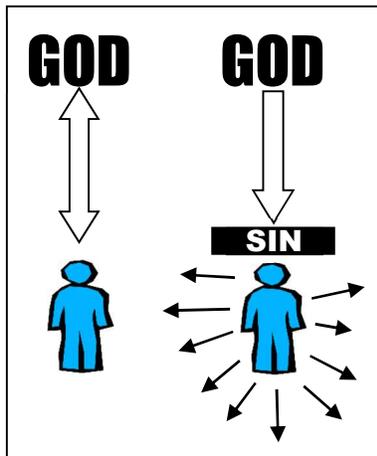
Lesson 2

SURRENDER: BEING LOVED COMPLETELY

*Men have now by nature no peace within their hearts, for God is crowned there no longer, but there in the moral dusk, stubborn and aggressive usurpers fight among themselves for first place on the throne. This is not a mere metaphor, but an accurate analysis of our real spiritual trouble. There is within the human heart a tough fibrous root of fallen life whose nature is to possess, always to possess. It covets "things" with a deep and fierce passion. The pronouns **my** and **mine** look innocent enough in print, but their constant and universal use is significant. They express the real nature of the old Adamic man better than a thousand volumes of theology could do. They are verbal symptoms of our deep disease. The roots of our hearts have grown down into things, and we dare not pull up one rootlet lest we die. Things have become necessary to us, a development never originally intended. God's gifts now take the place of God, and the whole course of nature is upset by the monstrous substitution.*

—A. W. Tozer

Created in the image of God, we are worshipers by nature. Humanity's fall into sin has not destroyed our capacity to worship but has distorted it. Now instead of worshiping God, we worship other things ("idols of the heart"). We attach ourselves to these idols. They command our attention, affection, thoughts, time, and love. They become our source of identity, significance, and hope. But they will never satisfy. Indeed, they will ultimately betray and destroy us. It is God's grace that enables these idols to be identified and rooted out.



The **story of Jacob** is a good illustration of this process. Jacob ("heelcatcher") is a man who tried to control life, manipulate God, and take advantage of others for his own purposes. But, in Genesis 32, something drastic happens in his life.

THE GREAT _____ OF GOD (32:1-2)

When Jacob fled the Promised Land to escape from his brother, Esau, God appeared to him along the way with His angels (28:12). God promised to bless Jacob, protect him, and bring him back to the Land safely. Now twenty years later, God has been faithful.

The appearance again of the "angels of God" (32:1) is a reminder to Jacob of God's promise and His ceaseless protection.

Man's nature, so to speak, is a perpetual factory of idols.

—John Calvin

One very difficult aspect of sin is that my sin never feels like sin to me. My sin feels like life to me, plain and simple. My heart is an idol factory, and my mind is an excuse-making factory.

—Rosaria Butterfield

Let God have your life; He can do more with it than you can.

—Dwight L. Moody

Can we give up all for the love of God? When the surrender of ourselves seems too much to ask, it is first of all because our thoughts about God Himself are paltry. If we had the least notion of His lovingkindness and tender mercy, His fatherly care for His poor children, His generosity, His beautiful plans for us...if we had any inkling of all this, could we be reluctant to let go of our smashed dandelions or whatever we clutch so fiercely in our sweaty little hands?

—Elisabeth Elliott

THE GREAT _____ OF JACOB (32:3-21)

As Jacob nears the Promised Land, he sends a message to his brother, Esau, hoping that twenty years has mellowed Esau's violent hatred of him for stealing his blessing (27:41). Esau's response doesn't look good.

- Jacob is greatly _____ and _____ (32:7).
- Jacob's anxiety moves him to several actions:
 - He divides his camp to minimize his losses (32:7-8).
 - He _____ (32:9-12).
 - He prepares a multitude of gifts to appease Esau (32:13-21).

THE GREAT _____ OF GOD AND JACOB (32:22-32)

Anxious and restless, Jacob sends his family to the other side of the river. Alone in the darkness, he is suddenly attacked by an unknown assailant.

- **What?**
- **When?**
- **Where?**
- **Who?**
- **How?**
- **Why?** God _____ Jacob in order to _____ him.

Jacob is changed by this encounter. His name changes. His focus changes. His relationship with God changes (cf. Genesis 48:15-16; Hebrews 11:21).

For the rest of his life, every time he limps, Jacob vividly remembers that God's grace is made perfect in his weakness (cf. 2 Corinthians 12:8-10).

Walking the God-Centered Path This Week

- What are you anxious about? What are you angry about? What do you feel like you have to have in order to be happy and satisfied? What do you need to lay on the altar and surrender to God?
- What difficulty or weakness are you struggling with right now? How could God be using this to draw you into greater reliance on Him?
- Complete the Lesson 3 study on *The Word: Hearing God*.

Distressed. Hebrew, *yatsar*, "to bind, to be in narrow straits."

Love looks forward, hate looks back, anxiety has eyes all over its head. —Mignon McLaughlin

A day of worrying is more exhausting than a day of work. —John Lubbock

Appease. Hebrew, *kaphar*, "to cover, to make atonement."

He wrestled. Hebrew, *ya'abaq*, "to grapple, to get dusty."

Jacob has been wrestling all of his life—in the womb, in the birth-right, with Laban, with his wives. Jacob hasn't been wrestling with these people but ultimately with God. —Robert Alter

The physical struggle symbolized the spiritual struggle between Jacob's self-will and God's will. —Howard Vos

Israel. Hebrew, "one who wrestles with God" or "God prevails." The name *Israel* seems to have an intentional double meaning. The one who wrestles with God and prevails is the one who is surrendered to God alone. He is a "God-mastered man."

When I stop telling God what I want, He can freely work His will in me without any hindrance. He can crush me, exalt me, or do anything else He chooses. He simply asks me to have absolute faith in Him and His goodness. —Oswald Chambers
My Utmost for His Highest, November 10

What Thou wilt, when Thou wilt, how Thou wilt. —John Newton