

## Discover More: Together

### Individual Devotions

#### Discover More about the Message

**Message Introduction:** Sometimes, we discover God through wrestling with fears, hopes, and uncertainties. In the reading, Jacob's past is catching up to him, and he wrestles with God through the night. At the end of the night, Jacob receives a blessing from God, and he is given courage to face the future, though it comes at the cost of a limp.

Reflect on the message you heard in person or on-line.

- + What is something you heard that was interesting or engaging?
- + Is there anything that raised a question or needed more explanation?
- + What is one thing you take with you? It may be something to do, something to trust, or a wisdom of insight to have.

You can listen to the message online here.

<https://www.firstlutheran.org/>

#### Discover Scripture and Life

- + Read the scripture.

#### Genesis 32:22-30.

<sup>3</sup>Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, <sup>4</sup>instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant

Jacob, 'I have lived with Laban as an alien, and stayed until now; <sup>5</sup>and I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves; and I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.'"

<sup>6</sup>The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." <sup>7</sup>Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies, <sup>8</sup>thinking, "If Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company that is left will escape."

<sup>9</sup>And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good,' <sup>10</sup>I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. <sup>11</sup>Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him; he may come and kill us all, the mothers with the children. <sup>12</sup>Yet you have said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted because of their number.'"

<sup>22</sup>The same night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven

children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. <sup>23</sup>He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. <sup>24</sup>Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. <sup>25</sup>When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. <sup>26</sup>Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." <sup>27</sup>So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." <sup>28</sup>Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." <sup>29</sup>Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. <sup>30</sup>So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved."

Respond to one of these questions.

- + Have you ever faced a reckoning? Where your mistakes or misdeeds begin to catch up to you? What did that feel like? Can you identify with Jacob in the story?
- + Jacob compelled the man (God) to give him a blessing, as if holding God to his promises. Against uncertainties of life, even doubt of God, faith will hold onto God's promises, as if to hold God

accountable to those promises. What is a promise from God that you hold God accountable? Forgiveness? Heaven? Salvation? Presence and Peace?

### Together in Spirit

Take time to reflect about your day, your concerns, and how God may be speaking to you.

#### OPTION 1: One word

As you reflect about your day, what is one word that summarizes how you are feeling? What might God be saying to you in this word?

#### OPTION 2: Reflecting on the past 24 hours

**Ask God** to calm your self and help you see your life from God's perspective.

**Review** the last 24 hours. What happened? What stands out? What captures your attention? What is a High and Low of this time?

**Give your day** to God your day. Ask for forgiveness where needed. Give thanks.

**Look forward.** How might you be more loving this day? What is God calling you to do?

Close in the Lord's Prayer

## Five Minutes with God

### Genesis 32:22-30

**Introduction:** Have you noticed how important blessings are in the Bible? Blessings are given, stolen, and even wrestled for. They're serious business as they send people on journeys, change lives, and even give new names. But there's also a humbler side to blessings as well. Whenever we bless someone or something, we ask God to bring the grace and goodness of God into the stuff of daily life: meals, good-byes, relationships, and even sneezes. Blessings are more than feel good words. They are also a radical response to the meanness and pessimism that so often shows up in our lives.

**Spiritual Practice:** Speak blessings this week! You don't need elaborate words or techniques. Simply saying "bless you" to someone (silently counts), pausing before you eat, or asking God to bless a new project qualify as blessing. Perhaps there's a tense situation or relationship in your life that could use some grace and goodness. Try blessing it. Keep your eyes open to the ways you already are blessed, giving thanks for these blessings. May we be blessed this week with grace and goodness as we speak blessings.



**First Lutheran**  
discover more : together

Personal Devotions

October 10-15