

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Mary Byars
 Cradle Roll 2: Larry Byars
 6:30 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Kristi Hooper
 Cradle Roll 2: Volunteer Needed!
 Wed. Evening Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
 Cradle Roll 2: Volunteer Needed!

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of June 10, 2018

Sunday School ----- 14
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 40
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 32
 Wed. Eve. Service, 06/13/18 ----- 21

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of June 10, 2018 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,767.60
 Love Offering, Dr. Paul Stringer ----- \$ 40.00
Total Received for Week of 06/10/18: \$ 1,807.60

- Week of June 3, 2018 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,259.00
Total Received for Week of 06/03/18: \$ 1,259.00

- Week of May 27, 2018 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 738.59
Total Received for Week of 05/27/18: \$ 738.59

- Week of May 20, 2018 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 15.11
Total Received for Week of 05/20/18: \$ 15.11

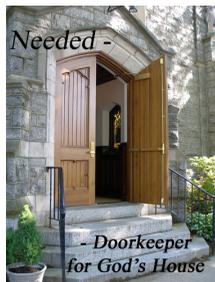
- Week of May 13, 2018 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 849.65
Total Received for Week of 05/13/18: \$ 849.65

- Week of May 6, 2018 -

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,830.09
Total Received for Week of 05/06/18: \$ 1,830.09

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. **Admit that you are a sinner.**
2. **Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.**
3. **Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.**
4. **You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).**
5. **By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.**



Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go *up*. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start *today* - OK? Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
 Lois Mae Floyd ----- Pianist/ Organist
Volunteer Needed! ----- Greeter
 Shayne Hooper, Charity Crawford, LeAnna White ----- S.S. Teachers
 Larry & Mary Byars, Dwayne English ----- Outreach
 Bertha Segebarr ----- Custodian
 Flowers ----- Shirley White, Charity Crawford

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY
REMINDER

Volume XXIII

June 17, 2018

Number 24

Going Back to Bethel

by Cooper P. Abrams, III



In 1889, Robert Louis Stevenson wrote the compelling science fiction thriller *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. It is about a doctor who invented a potion that would change him from a respectable, reserved professional man into a deranged psychopath.

The Bible tells us of another man who lived 2,800 years ago who had a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde kind of existence. Jacob was a man with two natures. He was a man that appeared at times to be at war with himself. But he is also a man with whom other men can identify. On this Father's Day, we will look at the checkered life of Jacob. We will frankly face his failings. But we will also see the other side of his life. The Bible clearly tells of his shortcomings but also of the victories he enjoyed. As we consider his life we will do so in the following categories. We will consider:

I. WHAT HE DID WRONG -

He lived a life of deception - Jacob was a schemer and a trickster and was selfish from the day of his birth. Jacob was born the second son of Isaac and Rebekah. He had

a twin brother named Esau. The name "Jacob" literally means "he that grasps the heel." When used figuratively the name means "deceiver."

As the boys grew, Jacob lived up to his name. He refused to give his starving brother food until he got something in return (Genesis 25:29-33). He then tricked his old blind father (Genesis 27:6-29) into giving him Esau's birthright, the right of the oldest son to become leader of the family when the father became too old. As a result, Jacob had to run for his life and spent the next 20 years in hiding with his uncle. Uncle Laban turned the tables on Jacob and tricked him into marrying the unwanted sister of his fiancé.

He was a poor husband - He married Leah first because of Laban's deception and then married Rachel. In a day when plural marriages were common, Jacob had equal responsibility to both women. But he neglected Leah. He perhaps thought he had good reasons. See if these reasons sound familiar:

She was not the woman he thought he married. He thought he was marrying her sister. He was startled after their wedding night to look at her face and see that she was not who he thought she was (Genesis 29:25). A contemporary Jacob would have said, "Wow, have you changed!"

How many husbands neglect their wives today because they say she is not the girl he married? She either changed in her appearance or in her personality. Maybe her health changed for the worse. They feel they have been cheated and are justified in whatever actions they take. If he wants to divorce her or stay married and neglect her, he has a right because he has been short-changed in marriage.

The wife of a couple I married while I pastored in Virginia was in a terrible auto accident and was totally disabled. She had to have hospital care continually. Her medical bills were enormous. Her father-in-law urged his son to divorce her to get from under the cost of her care. That is what he did, and not too long afterward he remarried. So much for the vow he sore too before me the day I married them. They meant nothing to him. His actions proved that.

Yet, I have seen others couples when a spouse was disabled or became very sick they stuck by their husband or wife in spite of the great hardship it was on them. Their love and devotion was clearly seen in the sacrifices they made. The greatest task we have

(continued inside)

on earth is to serve others and that service begins at home with our wives and families.

‘ **Jacob thought his right to happiness was greater than his commitment to marriage.** He didn’t divorce Leah, but he treated her as though she was not his wife.

As a pastor, I have numbers of times sat with couples who are contemplating getting a divorce. Some of the time they tell of adultery or money problems. But in the vast majority of cases, the couples on the verge of a divorce who are seeking my counsel tell me, “we are just not happy.” They speak of happiness as if it is an inalienable right. It is not! Where in the Bible does it say, “You will marry and live happily ever after and never have any problems”? The Bible never promises that all marriages will be filled with happiness and be problem free. It does say, however, that a man and a woman will become one. That oneness gives us new resources with which to face the difficulties of life.

‘ **Jacob played favorites with his children.** He lavished his attention on some of them and neglected others. As a result his mistakes were mirrored in the lives of his children. His sons were wild, unruly and unbelievably cruel.

His responsibility was to set the example for them and their families, but he failed miserably and that propagated his mistakes to his children and their families. Our sins are not isolated to us alone, but they effect all around us. Further generations suffer for the sins of their ancestors. The unfaithfulness of a father will be surely reflected in his children. The problem is some fathers may be only marginally faithful to the Lord, and they children will not be faithful at all. The unfaithful father taught his children that serving and being faithful to the Lord is not important for them.

On the other hand, the opposite is true also. A faithful father sets an example that inspires his children to love the Lord as he does. They learn what a family should be from their parents and the example they see. What a blessing to see a family....a true family...a Christian, love loving and honoring family. What a blessing to see their children love the Lord too and serve Him. A faithful father can do no greater thing on earth than to set a proper example before his children....and the example and blessing will extend into many future generations.

II. WHAT HE DID RIGHT -

We wouldn’t have an accurate picture of Jacob if we looked only at his mistakes.

He had a desire to serve the Lord. In the final analysis, we realize that God chose Jacob. He didn’t seem like the ideal choice. He was full of faults. Yes, there was some good in him, but there was so much bad. Yet, God had great plans for him.

Having stolen his brother’s blessing, Jacob ran for his life. He ran toward Haran. For the first time in his life he was alone and away from the shelter of his home. Lonely and dejected, Jacob stopped in Bethel. In the bleak, rocky countryside, he bedded down for the night and took a stone for a pillow.

During the night, he had a dream of a ladder that reached from the earth to the very gates of Heaven. You see, God is reaching out to the wayward to bring them into fellowship with Him. He sees in us what He can make us.

‘ **He saw angels going up and coming down the ladder.** God spoke to him in his dream and assured Jacob that he was not alone.

‘ Genesis 28:16 says, “*And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.*”

‘ Genesis 28:20-21 says, “*Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God.*”

‘ **Jacob had made a lot of mistakes but deep inside he knew who made him and he knew that he owed his life and his allegiance to the Lord.** How important it is for a man to realize that he is the special creation of Almighty God and that God has a purpose and plan for his life.

A man alone is a sorry creature. A man who does not accept he is responsible to God and that His loving creator wants the very best for him...is a miserable man. He is lost from his purpose and can never be satisfied, nor experience true life and the peace and joy of living...until he submits in belief himself to His God and Creator.

‘ **Jacob faithfully worked for Uncle Laban for 20 years even when Laban tried to trick him (Gen. 31:38).** But even in the years when God was increasing his herds and flocks, Jacob failed to see that God was the reason for his prosperity rather than his own cleverness.

Jacob is the example of a lot of men. They know what is right. They know of God, but they just will not submit themselves to Him. They let themselves be easily distracted. They are too busy with seeking pleasure, money, fun, and living in the world than to serve the Lord. They are many a terrible mistake....trading things that are worthless for the eternal blessings of God.

‘ **Jacob finally broke with Laban and traveled toward the south.** Once again, God reached out to him. Angels met him there and told him that Esau was coming to meet him with an army of 400 men (Gen. 32:6). That night, Jacob wrestled with an angel. He wanted God to touch his life and change him from the deceitful trickster he had always been to a man that God could use in a mighty way. The angel asked him his name and he told him it was “Jacob.” He was saying, “*My name is `cheat and deceiver. I am by nature a cheater, but I want to be different.*” *And the angel of the Lord said that from that day on, his name would be changed to `Israel: a prince with God’* (Gen. 32:28).

What a joy it is to get one’s heart right with God. What a blessing to see the reality of life itself and to accept the grace and mercy of a loving and caring Saviour!!!

‘ **He recommitted himself to the Lord and led his family to the Lord.**

After seeing highs and lows in the lives of his children Jacob returned to Bethel and to the commitment he made there years earlier. Going back to Bethel was a time of renewal for Jacob. God demanded a high price for the sin in his life in terms of his own hardships and the problems he saw in children’s lives. With his recommitment to the Lord, the problems of his life did not disappear, but he finally became the father he should have been all along.

Jacob gave the order that all of the idols of the past be buried. You see, Jacob knew that was what he would have to do if he submitted himself to the Lord. For all those years he could not give up the idols that pleased him. They were too dear to him, but now he saw the truth and he wanted God’s blessing on himself and his family. He made the decision that he and his family would serve the Lord God.

Michael Josephson runs the Josephson Institute for the Advancement of Ethics. He has conducted exhaustive studies of people 18-30 years old. He has compiled the results of numerous surveys and reports to get a broad view of the morality of the so-called “younger generation.” His conclusion: “An unprecedented proportion of today’s youth lack commitment to core moral values like honesty, personal responsibility, respect for others and civic duty.” (Assoc. Press, 10-11-90.)

But if that is true and our children are morally weak, where do we lay the blame? We may try to lay it at the feet of educators, or blame it on television, or on the entertainment industry. But we know that we who are parents must shoulder much of the responsibility.

‘ **He prepared his children for his death.** In Genesis 49, He gave them his blessing and talked to them about the future. It was a future without him. But with all of his mistakes in life, he succeeded in raising sons that became the foundation of the nation of Israel. He knew that he was dying and he took his last words to give guidance and direction to his children.

Fathers, we are not as invincible as we like for people to think. Our children will someday face life without us. How will they live then? Where will they turn when they make decisions? If death takes us out of the picture before our children are off on their own, will we have given them the raw materials from which they can continue to build their lives?.

III. CONCLUSION -

One of our duties as parents is to work ourselves out of a job. We look forward with mixed emotions to the day when they are mature and off on their own. We have the responsibility to:

- ‘ Teach them to live independent, Christ honoring lives;
- ‘ Lead them to faith in Christ;
- ‘ Continue to love and encourage them throughout their lives.

In the 20th century we still can’t get away from the directives God’s Word gives for parents -

‘ Ephesians 6:4 says, “*Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*”

ARE YOU LIKE JACOB? You may be more like Jacob than you want to admit. May we fathers privately admit today our failures a husband and a father.

My father was a simple man and not well educated. He never had a class on how to raise children. He was not perfect and he made mistakes, but in one thing was always consistence, he worked hard to provide for us and we knew he loved the Lord. He was faithful to Mom and to his responsibilities for providing for us.

I did not know the value of that until after I was saved and submitted my life to Jesus Christ. I became a father who loved my wife and son and began to understand the responsibility. I remember what I was before I was saved, and I am ashamed. I thought so highly of myself, yet I was a mere shell of man. I was empty, wasting my life, and hurting those I loved with my foolishness. I was living for myself and really not giving true love to my family. **Oh how I thank God for changing me...for seeking me in the worthless state I was in!** We have a loving and wonderful God...I know that completely.

The responsibility goes on also to the grandparents. We can have a great influence on our grandchildren and help our sons and daughters raise them.

You may look at the mistakes of the past and conclude that you have done such damage to the important relationships in your life that there is nothing you can do to rectify your mistakes. But for every Jacob reading this, remember that God is forgiving and seeks to be your strength and Guide. Remember that God has given you your family and if you will look to Him, He will give you wisdom to be the husband and father you need to be.

In the New Testament we read the post script of Jacob’s life. Hebrews 11:21 says, “*By faith Jacob, when he was a dying... worshipped the Lord.*”

For every person reading this, both male and female, young and old, married and unmarried, we can all make the trip back to Bethel that Jacob made. We can go back and repair the relationship with God that may have long been neglected.

Maybe there is a wayward Christian husband reading this. Would you journey back in your heart to that place where you first met the Lord? Will you go back right now to that time when you were much closer to the Lord than you are now? Would you now let the Lord be the true Saviour of your live and of your family.

If you are a Christian and you have wondered away from the Lord, why not back to Him right now? ÷