

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

The Reckoning
Week 4: Sin Lies Within
Genesis 29-31

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Life can sometimes feel like a wild frontier. That certainly was the case for Jacob, Isaac's second-born son and Israel's namesake patriarch. As Jacob faces some of his past mistakes and finds redemption through God's grace, his story will spur us on our private journey of transformation. This week, we're examining the issue of ongoing faults in our own lives.

Kicking It Off:

What's the most interesting place you've ever seen while driving, and did a speeding ticket change the scenery for you?

Discussion:

1. Based on what you heard from this week's message, how did Jacob experience a deceiver and a cheater in dealing with his father-in-law, Laban? When have you encountered someone treating you in a similar fashion?
2. Think of a time when you realized something negative from your life and it changed your perspective of the situation. If you're comfortable, share with your group what transpired. What do you think makes self-awareness of our personal sin so important?
3. How might having a heart of gratitude for God's grace help to make us more like Jesus?
4. List some potential consequences that can occur when we're clueless about our sin. On the other hand, what kind of personal growth is possible when we find humility and perspective on our offensive ways? How does Psalm 139:23-24 challenge you to improve in this area?

"God, see what is in my heart. Know what is there. Test me. Know what I'm thinking. See if there's anything in my life you don't like. Help me live in the way that is always right." (NIRV)

5. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used a bit of exaggeration to drive home the point of avoiding hypocrisy — i.e., not missing the plank in our own eyes when we see the sawdust in someone else's. What are some tools available to help you lovingly deal with negativity in your relationships, at school, your neighborhood, or at work? How can your group hold you accountable in this?

"You look at the bit of sawdust in your friend's eye. But you pay no attention to the piece of wood in your own eye. How can you say to your friend, 'Let me take the bit of sawdust out of your eye'? How can you say this while there is a piece of wood in your own eye? You pretender! First take the piece of wood out of your own eye. Then you will be able to see clearly to take the bit of sawdust out of your friend's eye." (Matthew 7:3-5, NIRV)

Wrapping Up:

Ask God for clarity and wisdom for each group member, aiming to live godly lives and deal honestly with any personal sin. As you close, thank God for His grace and growth in your life.