

# The Blessing

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[ 0 : 00 ] I want to invite you this morning to open up your Bibles to the book of Genesis again.

We have been in Genesis for quite a while now and we are still in the book of Genesis. Last week we covered the majority of chapter 26 as we looked there at the life of Isaac himself.

The one chapter in all of Genesis that really puts its focus upon Isaac. So that we're able to get a glimpse from chapter 26 of what Isaac was like and how the Lord worked through him.

We saw that Isaac was, at least in comparison to Abraham his father and Jacob his son, Isaac was a very ordinary man. Yes, extraordinarily blessed by God, but there are very few things in his life that really stand out.

In the moments where he becomes most pivotal throughout the biblical story is when he's acted upon by other characters. He is laid on the altar by his father Abraham and now in chapter 27 we will see as he is deceived by his very own son.

[ 1 : 20 ] But we're actually going to be beginning this morning in chapter 26 because we didn't cover the last two verses because they set the stage for everything that unfolds in chapter 27.

And they prepare us for the beginning of chapter 28 where this stage in the life of Isaac and Jacob concludes. Now because we have a long passage this morning from verse 34 of 26 to verse 9 of chapter 28, we're only going to read the first portion of chapter 27.

And so we're going to pick up in verse 1 of chapter 27 and read the first 17 verses so that we can see Isaac's involvement in these things and the events as they unfold and how he begins the events of this story.

And then we can see his wife Rebecca's involvement as well. So I want to invite you to stand to your feet as we read these 17 verses together. We read, When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called Esau, his elder son, and said to him, My son.

And he answered, Here I am. He said, Behold, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. Now then take your weapons, your quiver, and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me.

[ 2 : 34 ] And prepare for me delicious food such as I love, and bring it to me so that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die. Now Rebecca was listening when Isaac spoke to his son Esau.

So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it, Rebekah said to her son Jacob, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau. Bring me game and prepare for me delicious food that I may eat it, and bless you before the Lord before I die.

Now therefore, my son, obey my voice as I commanded you. Go to the flock and bring me two good young goats so that I may prepare for them delicious food for your father such as he loves. And you shall bring it in to your father to eat so that he may bless you before he dies.

But Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, my brother Esau is a hairy man and I am a smooth man. Perhaps my father will feel me and I shall seem to be mocking him and bring a curse upon myself and not a blessing.

His mother said to him, Let your curse be on me, my son. Obey only my voice and go and bring them to me. So he went and took them and brought them to his mother, and his mother prepared delicious food such as his father loved.

[ 3 : 43 ] Then Rebekah took the best garments of Esau, her older son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob, her younger son. And the skin of the young goat she put on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck, and she put the delicious food and the bread which she had prepared into the hand of her son Jacob.

Father, now as we move through the rest of this story, and as we consider these details from the lives of Isaac and Rebekah and Jacob and Esau, teach us, we ask.

In Christ's name, amen. You guys take a seat. I think that we can safely say that at this point in the story of Genesis, that Isaac and Rebekah's marriage is in many ways on the rocks. It's in trouble. They're facing difficulties. They're divided. They're not of one mind. They're not united together in the way that they think about their children, in the way that they think toward one another.

They're very much divided, which comes as somewhat of a surprise, because more than Abraham and Sarah's marriage, their marriage has been presented as what we would consider probably to be, in the few glimpses that we have into it, a good marriage.

[ 5 : 02 ] So that we read early on of Rebekah and the kind of woman that she was. She was kind. She was servant-hearted, willing to serve Abraham's servants and to water all of their camels and try and approach her brother and father about welcoming him into their home.

She was willing to do all of those things so that she caught the eye of the servant. In fact, we're told that she was a very beautiful young woman. So the picture of her early on is that she is beautiful outside and inside, and so the servant greatly desires that this would be the woman that he would bring home to present to his master's son as a wife.

And that's exactly how the story unfolds. And us being 21st century Westerners, we get nervous at that point because we think, ooh, an arranged marriage, this cannot go well.

And yet even as she's brought in, we are told that Isaac, after he married her, was comforted after the death of his mother. And we are told specifically that he loved her.

And that may seem to be an unimportant detail to add. Of course he loved her. She was his wife. But we don't often get that detail in husband-wife relationships at this stage in the biblical story.

[ 6 : 13 ] And so it is significant that we are told specifically that he loved his wife. These glimpses that we're getting early on show hope for their marriage.

That it will be better than Abraham's and Sarah's. Abraham's and Sarah's, which was fraught with difficulty partly because of her barrenness and the frustrations that that caused throughout their lives, partly because of their desperation and their willingness to try to accomplish what God has promised to give them on the basis of their own strength in presenting Hagar to Abraham as an alternative route for Abraham having children through whom the promises might pass.

And we think, here's a better marriage. And even as we move ahead, we see that they do face some of the same difficulties. That Rebecca, like Sarah before her, goes 20 years into their marriage being unable to have children.

But we see Isaac being a good and godly husband and interceding on her behalf and praying to the Lord. And the Lord answers his prayer. And so she conceives these children.

They appear to have, at least from the small amount of information that we have, they appear to have a good marriage and a healthy marriage and a marriage that is based upon love.

[ 7 : 22 ] But things begin to take a turn after the birth of the children. It's our first glimpse into some division between Isaac and Rebecca when we are told after their birth that Isaac loved Esau because Esau could bring him the food that he wanted because Esau was a man's man and he was out in the field and he was hunting.

And Rebecca, on the other hand, we're told loved Jacob. Perhaps because he stayed around the home, he dwelt in tents. Perhaps because it was to her that God had made known that the younger son would be the one who would receive the blessing.

We're never told why Rebecca favored him, but we know that they did. And so they each favored their own child, a separate child. And that began to create division in their family.

Until we arrive now here at chapter 27, and it's not just their marriage that's on the rocks, their entire family is now fractured, and it fractures even further as we move through the chapter.

You can even see that in the way that the story is told here. I'm not sure if you've ever recognized this in reading through this story, but you never see more than two people in the same location having a conversation together throughout this story.

[ 8 : 35 ] First you have Isaac and Rebecca. You have Isaac and Esau. And then you have Rebecca and Jacob. And then you have Jacob and Isaac, unbeknownst to Isaac. And then Rebecca comes back to Isaac.

And then you have Isaac and Jacob again. But never do you have more than two at a time having a conversation, sort of emphasizing this point that the family is, there's tension there. They are fractured.

They are not one family unit at this point in time. And all of that really traces back to the decisions of Isaac and Rebecca very early on to favor one child over the other.

It's the fatal mistake that they make. And unfortunately, you see it happening still today. It's perhaps not as overt in most families as it is here, but we do see it happening over and over again.

There is a temptation among parents particularly to favor the child that is either more like them or happens to be more helpful to them or participate and do the things that they enjoy.

[ 9 : 36 ] And so there is this temptation to favor one child over another at times. But I think even more deeply rooted than the favoritism that they show is the fact that they are willing to have separate ideas, separate opinions, and separate goals within their families and within their lives.

And that seems very clear from the birth of Jacob and Esau moving forward. It seems very clear that they have two different ideas of the direction in which their family is going to go.

And what we're going to see as we walk through chapter 27 is that those varying visions that they have are really the source of the fracturing of their family.

No character, none of these four individuals is presented in a positive light as we move through this particular story. In fact, the backdrop of this story is one in which we're reminded that Esau bears responsibility for his position within the family.

Yes, God has made a sovereign choice, as Paul says, before they were born, before either of them had done anything good or bad, but that doesn't negate Esau's full responsibility for his actions.

[ 10 : 53 ] And we are reminded at the end of chapter 26 that Esau is not a child who has done anything to earn or deserve the favoritism of his father. Look back in verse 34 of chapter 26.

When Esau was 40 years old, he took Judith, the daughter of Bari the Hittite, to be his wife, and Basimath, the daughter of Elan the Hittite. And notice this, they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.

Esau's decisions, the women that Esau chooses to marry, are targeted at Isaac and Rebekah. They make their lives bitter.

They make their lives full of trouble. They are distraught because of these wives. And if you move further in chapter 27, you can see in verse 46, Rebekah expresses well her feelings.

She says in verse 46, she says, Rebekah said to Isaac, I loathe my life because of the Hittite women.

[ 12 : 02 ] That's where she was. She hated her life because of the decisions that Esau had made in bringing these women who had a different ethnic background, but more importantly, worshipped different gods.

God continually forbids the Israelites to intermarry with the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the other ites of the land, primarily because they worshipped other gods.

They did not have the same sense of priority and purpose and meaning that Isaac and Rebekah would have had. They made her life miserable.

And Isaac's as well. And that helps us to better see the way that Isaac is presented in the first four verses of chapter 27.

Isaac is presented as an old man, and yet we know as we read through the rest of the story that he's got several more decades left in his life. And he's presented as feeble.

[ 13 : 05 ] We're told that he's blind, and his blindness is clearly a real physical blindness, but we also see in him a kind of spiritual blindness. Notice what we're told.

He says to Esau at the end of verse 1, My son, and he answers, here I am. He says, Behold, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt for game, and prepare for me delicious food such as I love, and bring it to me so that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.

He is determined to pass the blessing of Abraham down to Esau. Now there are one of two possibilities here. We are never told throughout the story that Rebecca communicated to Isaac what God had told her about the two children.

It was to Rebecca that God had revealed that the older will serve the younger. We're never told specifically if Rebecca communicated that to Isaac. I think there's probably a high degree of likelihood that at some point in time over the years, I mean, decades have passed, that she probably communicated that to him, but we don't know, which means one of two things is true.

Either Isaac knows what God's plan is, and Isaac is foolishly and blindly walking in another direction, or their relationship is such that she has never even bothered to share with him this most

important, most crucial detail of their lives.

[14:42] in which case their relationship is clearly for a long time has been broken. It has not been healthy.

And you might think, but that's not Isaac's fault. How can we hold Isaac responsible for those sorts of things? Because Isaac is to be aware of what's going on.

Isaac is supposed to know he should have seen something different. He should have seen Rebecca's change of attitude. He should have pursued it. He should have asked. He's responsible. And yet we get silence from Isaac throughout most of the story, mirroring, I think, the silence of Adam himself as the serpent tempts Eve in the garden, where we're told that the entire time that Eve was being tempted, Adam was there with her, and then he ate.

He says nothing. He is silent. He fails to be a good leader and a good husband in that moment, and it plunges the human race into ruin. And Isaac has failed in some way, in one way or another, to lead and be a godly husband for the last several years and throughout most of his son's lifetime because they are divided.

[15:58] They are of two minds. Isaac's blindness is not merely a physical blindness. It is a spiritual blindness to the realities around them and to what God is actually planning to do so that Isaac's plan at this point is in a direct contradiction to God's plan.

And whether he knew, whether Rebecca communicated that to him specifically or not, Isaac bears responsibility for the blindness that has beset him and his heart.

But Rebecca is no better. What we see out of Rebecca, beginning in verse 5 all the way down to verse 17, what we see from Rebecca is scheming.

If Isaac is blind to the realities around him, blind to what God is actually doing and how God is moving and trying to accomplish things, Rebecca, on the other hand, is a schemer. She is prepared to do whatever she feels necessary to ensure that her son that she favors receives the blessing. Never mind the fact that God has already told her how things are going to play out. God has already told her what her plan is. Faith in Him would have caused her to rest upon hearing of Isaac's plan and to see what is God going to do to thwart my husband's plans because my husband's plans cannot overrule the plans of the Lord.

[17:23] She doesn't do that. She takes it upon herself. She schemes and she plots and she plans. Even when Jacob, even when he protests, even when he says, I don't think we can do, I don't think this is going to work, he will know, he will find out, he's hairy, I'm smooth.

He will know. She nevertheless, she plots and she schemes. And probably the high point where we realize what's really happening in her heart is there in verse 13 where she responds to him, to his protest, and she simply says, let your curse be on me, my son.

Only obey my voice and go bring them to me. Do you hear the irony in that? Just do what I say. Never mind that God has already made His will known. Not do what the Lord says. Be obedient to Him. No matter how dark and difficult things seem to be, my son, we will follow the Lord.

No, it is obey my voice. Again, echoing the fall in the garden as Adam listened to and obeyed the voice of his wife.

[18:38] What we are seeing is the downfall, the fall of a family. And it's tragic. Isaac is blind.

Rebecca is scheming. And now Jacob comes into the picture and he does exactly what we might expect him to do. Given the character that we've already seen from him and his willingness to take advantage of his brother when his brother was desperate and in need of food and stealing his brother's inheritance from him.

We've seen his character. We shouldn't be surprised at what he does. Pick up in verse 18. So he, that's Jacob, went into his father and said, my father.

And he said, here I am. Who are you, my son? So there's some indication that he suspects something. Something's up. So Jacob just lies. Jacob said to his father, I am Esau, your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Now sit up and eat of my game that your soul may bless me. He makes it clear what his plan is. He lies and then gets quickly to it. Eat so you can bless me. Let's get this done. Let's get this over with.

[19:48] Because Esau's out hunting in the field. Who knows when he's coming back? Who knows at any moment Esau could arrive? So he's got to get this over with quickly. And now as he moves forward on at least four occasions in this meeting between him and his father, you sense some tension and some danger.

Will Isaac figure this out? Verse 20. Here we go the first time. But Isaac said to his son, how is it that you have found it so quickly, my son? In other words, he recognizes that was a pretty fast hunt. How did you do this so quickly? He lies again. But he moves beyond just lying now into blasphemy. He answered, because the Lord your God granted me success.

Do you see what he's doing now? He's using God's name in vain. He's throwing God into the equation. Yahweh, your God, gave me success.

It's not just a lie now. It's a blasphemous lie. But Isaac's not through. He still doesn't trust. Verse 21. Then Isaac said to Jacob, please come near me that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not.

[ 21 : 05 ] He's suspicious. He doesn't believe it. So Jacob went near to Isaac, his father, who felt him and said, the voice is Jacob's voice. But the hands are the hands of Esau.

He knows because his voice has given him away, but in his blindness, he's confused. He's not quite sure.

We're told, interestingly enough, that after he feels his hands and he's a little bit more convinced that it's Esau, we're told that he blessed him, but he hasn't actually blessed him yet because one more time before the blessing comes, two more times actually, he's going to question.

Verse 24. Are you really my son Esau? He answered, I am. He said, then bring it near to me that I may eat of my son's game and bless you. So he brought it, that's the food, near to him.

He ate. He brought him wine. He drank. Now the last test that Isaac offers up. Father Isaac said to him, come near and kiss me, my son. So he came near and kissed him and Isaac smelled the smell of his garments.

[ 22 : 16 ] He knows that something is up. He knows that something is not quite right. He hears the voice. The voice is off. The voice is Jacob's voice. It's not Esau's voice. He thinks, I'll feel him to see because they have completely different skin.

I'll feel him to see. But Rebecca and Jacob have already figured that one out. He's not convinced quite yet. Not yet. He questions him again.

Bring me the food now. He's going to taste the food. But Rebecca's figured that out. Rebecca has already said that she can prepare the food that Jacob likes. In other words, she has already said, I can make food that tastes just like Esau's food.

I've got that covered. She can do that. And finally, one more time, come near. Come close to me. All so that he could smell him. See.

He's thought of that as well because of the animal skins and everything else that he's done. He smells like Esau. He doesn't sound like him, but he cooks like him, feels like him, and he smells like him.

[ 23 : 19 ] And so Isaac finally gives in and gives him the blessing. Verse 27. See, the smell of my son is the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed.

May God give to you the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine. That's more of a general blessing. And in verse 29, we really get the Abrahamic blessing. Let people serve you and nations bow down to you.

Be Lord over your brothers and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you and blessed be everyone who blesses you.

So finally, he has now received the Abrahamic blessing. Finally, he has it. And so he exits quickly and just in time because now his brother arrives on the scene in verse 30.

And his brother arrives on the scene doing everything that he was told to do. He's brought his father some food. He's prepared everything just as he was to prepare it. He's done what he thought he was supposed to do, what would please his father.

[ 24 : 22 ] But he's surprised by the way that Isaac reacts as he comes in. Verse 31. He had prepared delicious food and he brought it to his father and he said to his father, Let my father arise and eat of his son's game that you may bless me.

His father Isaac said to him, You can picture him just confused. Who are you? He answered, I am your son, your firstborn Esau. Then Isaac trembled very violently and said, Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me and I ate all before you came and I have blessed him?

And he gives the conclusion, Yes. And he shall be blessed. And then Esau's reaction is no less emotional. As soon as Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry.

And then down in verse 38, Esau lifted up his voice and wept. Both men broken. Both men shattered. Isaac is blind and that leads to his failure and his disappointment. Rebecca is a schemer. Jacob is a liar and a blasphemer. But now Esau is a broken and eventually bitter man. All of this.

[ 25 : 36 ] All of this because Isaac and Rebecca have failed at a marriage that started out really well.

They made the same kinds of mistakes that people have been making for all of human history. Isaac failed to be a good and godly leader just as Adam failed in the garden. They were not one flesh as God had commanded in the garden. When God brings a man and woman together, He makes them one flesh. Jesus Himself even quotes that passage from Genesis chapter 2 and says, So what God has joined together, let no man separate. But in many practical ways, though they are still married, they are separate. They are of two minds. And they are both to blame. Isaac because of his failed leadership. Rebecca because she is so bound and determined to do the things that she wants to do and to get them done in her own way. How often, how many times do we see ourselves or we see others around us walk down those same paths?

[ 26 : 53 ] Most marriages, and there are exceptions of course, but most marriages start out well. I mean, most of the time you wouldn't choose to marry someone if you already were constantly at odds with them and didn't want to be around them and had different goals for your life than they had.

Most of the time people would kind of step back and avoid the whole thing in the first place. But how often do marriages begin to drift and change?

because husbands don't lead the way that they're supposed to lead and because wives have their own ideas, their own agendas, and their own goals for where they want to be and so they are separate.

It is a dangerous thing for husbands and wives to desire separate and opposite outcomes in their lives.

It is a dangerous thing for them to formulate the goals of their lives and their families on their own without reference or without counsel with one another. They are to be one flesh.

[ 27 : 59 ] Nobody thinks to themselves, well, I think with this half of my body I'm going to go over here and I'm going to accomplish this feat and with this other half of my body I'm going to send it over there.

We don't think in those ways because it's not possible. And yet we do that so often in our marriages. We go separate directions and pursue separate goals. And the results are always devastating just as they are for Isaac and for Rebecca.

In fact, as we look at the rest of the story, really the rest of the story beginning in verse 41 and moving down, it's all consequences. It's all consequences.

You have Esau who's bitter and angry and in a sense rightly so. He has come seeking a blessing that's been promised to him and he finds that there's no blessing for him.

Look up in verse 39 when he begs for a blessing. Isaac, it seems, attempting to bless him gives him an anti-blessing. Behold, away from the fatness of the earth shall your dwelling be, away from the dew of heaven on high.

[ 29 : 10 ] By your sword you shall live and you shall serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you shall break his yoke from your neck. The results, first Esau, bitterness and anger, hatred toward his brother.

Now Esau, verse 41, hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him. And Esau said to himself, the days of mourning for my father are approaching. Then I will kill my brother Jacob.

It is amazing how the divisions within a marriage can feed into the relationships of children.

If parents are divided, whether their children be young or adults, if parents are divided, children are also oftentimes divided and find themselves pitted against one another.

That's been the case for all of Jacob and Esau's life. And Esau has built up a hatred. It's not just this one event. He's angry over the theft of his inheritance. He's angry over their entire lives.

[ 30 : 18 ] And now he is determined, that's it. I'm going to kill my brother. Another consequence that we see here is found with Rebekah and Jacob.

Verse 42, the words of Esau, her older son, were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son and said to him, Behold, your brother Esau comforts himself about you by planning to kill you.

Now therefore, my son, once again, obey my voice. Arise, flee to Laban, my brother in Haran and stay with him a while until your brother's fury turns away, until your brother's anger turns away from you and he forgets what you have done to him.

Then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereft of you both in one day? She knows at this point if it hadn't been true before, and it probably had been, but now because of her involvement, because of her scheming, she knows now that she has lost forever her relationship with Esau.

It was already a troubled relationship. His wives made her bitter and angry and made her life difficult, but her favoritism of the other son probably made his life painful as well.

[ 31 : 32 ] She knows at this point it's over for her and Esau. What a painful moment that must be for a mother. It's done and it's over. There's nothing. She's done irreparable damage at this point.

And she can't bear the thought of losing Jacob as well if Esau should succeed in taking his life. So once again she comes up with her own plan.

Go away. Go to my brother and stay there however long you have to stay and eventually Esau will cool off and you will be able to come back. But as we read on in the story he's delayed and he's delayed and he's delayed and he spends years away in Haran.

By the time that Jacob actually returns to the promised land and returns to his family she's gone. She's died. In fact we're never even told about her death.

We're told about the death of Abraham the death of Sarah told about the death of Isaac we're told about the death of Jacob we're told about the death of Esau even we're never told about her death.

[ 32 : 41 ] This is the end of the story for her. All of her scheming and all of her plotting and what she desperately wants at the end of this is not to lose Jacob and she loses him anyway because she will never see him again and he will never see her again.

It's over. It's done. The fractured marriage that she had leading to a fractured family and a divided home has now cost her everything that she valued so very dearly.

And it's not over with there. She has to continue to plot she has to continue to scheme and she uses her dislike and her hatred of these Hittite women to convince Isaac to actually send Jacob away.

Verse 48 Rebecca said to Isaac I loathe my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these one of the women of the land what good will my life be to me?

And so Isaac responds and says fine he can go. Chapter 28 Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him you must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. Arise go to Paddan Aram to the house of Bethuel your mother's father and take as your wife from there one of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.

[ 34 : 00 ] And he repeats the Abrahamic blessing. God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you that you may become a company of peoples. May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you that you may take possession of the land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham.

And then the picture is of Jacob riding off into the sunset never to be seen by his mother again.

Thus Isaac sent Jacob away and he went to Paddan Aram to Laban the son of Bethuel the Aramean the brother of Rebekah Jacob and Esau's mother.

What's ironic about the end of the story is this is the first time throughout this entire chapter that Esau is ever referred to as Rebekah's son in any way. Here she's called his mother but throughout the story Esau is referred to as Isaac's son.

Throughout the story Jacob is referred to as Rebekah's son. And now finally at the end there is some acknowledgement that they are family but only in the midst of this incredible downfall.

Only in the midst of the destruction that has been left behind. And at the root of all of this of all of it is a determination is a determination on the part of Rebekah on the part of Jacob and even to a certain extent on the parts of Isaac and Esau a determination by them to bring God's blessing into the world.

[ 35 : 34 ] They will achieve they will determine who gets the blessing of Abraham and how they go about getting it. Isaac will pass it on to Esau. Esau will take it from Isaac.

Jacob and Rebekah are determined to steal that away. The root cause of all of this is that they are seeking to receive the blessing of Abraham on the basis of their own ability to grab it and hang on to it and make it their own.

All the while God has already said that He would freely give the blessings of Abraham to Jacob. It wasn't necessary for Rebekah to do any of these things.

It wasn't necessary for Jacob to do any of these things. God made a promise. And it wasn't conditioned on anything that Jacob would ever do. God made a promise.

He would give the blessing of Abraham to Jacob and then to Jacob's descendants. And the promise wasn't enough for them. They had to try to achieve it on their own.

[ 36 : 41 ] That I think is a misstep that many of us continue to make. We may understand what some of the promises of the Scriptures are.

We may value those promises. We may not be completely irreligious people with no idea, no notion of who God is and what God is like.

And yet we find at times that despite the fact that we have some knowledge of God, we have some understanding of where history is moving and what lies ahead, we think that we might somehow secure that future by our own efforts, by our own planning.

And yet the promises of God are never received by His people on the basis of their own efforts. It won't work.

work. The blessing of Abraham is not given to those who find a way to seize it for themselves. Ever. In fact, we read earlier in Galatians, and I want you to read there again.

[ 37 : 54 ] You want to turn over to Galatians chapter 3, where the Apostle Paul has a lot to say about the blessing of Abraham. He has a lot to say about that. Who receives it?

What it is? How it's passed on? Now, verse 14 is one of the most important statements that he makes. He says that Christ has come, verse 14, so that in Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles.

There was a whole reason that Jesus came into the world was so that this great blessing of Abraham, the same blessing that Isaac and Rebecca were trying to pass on by their own strength to the one that they wanted, the same blessing that Esau and Jacob were fighting over.

Paul says Jesus came into the world to make this blessing available even to the Gentiles. That's why he came. And on top of that, Christ has done all that is necessary for us to receive the great blessing of Abraham.

Look up and see verse 13. He says, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

[ 39 : 16 ] For it is written, curse it as everyone who is hanged on a tree. There are ultimately only two choices. There is either blessing or there is cursing.

Isaac learned that lesson. He tried to give a second blessing and only a curse would flow out of his mouth for Esau. There is only blessing and there is only cursing in an ultimate sense.

Yes, there are temporal, temporary blessings that God gives even to non-believers. Even Esau will go on and he will prosper throughout his life. He will.

But those blessings are temporary and they fade quickly. ultimately, ultimate blessing only leaves one other option and that is the curse.

And unfortunately for us, we are all already under the curse. We are all, all of us lawbreakers.

[ 40 : 20 ] Did you notice earlier when we were reading what Paul says? He says, cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law. I don't know about you, but I have not been able to abide by everything written in the law of God.

Not the law of Moses recorded in the Bible. Not the law of God inscribed upon my heart and every other heart in the world. I have not on any level been able to obey all that is written in the law of God.

I am a lawbreaker. I am a sinner and the curse of God belongs to me. Cursing and not blessing is mine. By right, and it is yours as well.

By right, you have earned it. It belongs to you. And Paul says, but Christ became a curse for us in our place in order that the blessing of Abraham might be ours.

Christ became our Esau in order that we might become Jacob. Christ took on the penalty of our sin in order that we might receive the reward of his righteousness.

[ 41 : 41 ] And ultimately, that's what the story of this fallen family is about. It is a reflection of the fall in the garden because we are all reflections of the fall in the garden.

And we are all of us in desperate need of the offspring who would come and crush the head of the serpent. And he has come. He has come and he has done his work in order that the blessing of Abraham might come even to Gentiles.

And it comes, the Apostle Paul says, very clearly in verse 14, so that we might receive the promised spirit through faith. It comes to us by faith.

He says that it is those who are of faith who are the sons of Abraham. The blessing of Abraham is brought to us through the work of Jesus and made our own through faith in Christ.

And if we learn anything from the story of the downfall of the family of Isaac, we ought to learn this one thing. However messed up we might be, however fractured our own lives and our own families might actually be, the cure is never to press in by our own strength and our own methods and our own will and our own plans in order to seize hold of the promises and blessings of God.

[ 43 : 11 ] But it is always to confess and say, I don't deserve the blessing. I only deserve the curse because of who I am and what I've done. But there is one who has gone before me and become the curse for me and I trust in him and his perfect righteousness.

Let's pray. do you