

Genesis

Embarrassing Ancestors and Our Glorious Hope

Genesis is all about God making an extravagantly gorgeous Creation to declare His glory and the horrifying result of our ancestors' rebellion against His kingly rule. It was written to remind us of our good God's promise to undo all the terror that our treason has wrought. It shows us our ancestors' faltering walk of faith and His faithful care for them, all the while paving the way for the coming King who would deliver us from ourselves and all who oppose our good God. The New Heavens and Earth will perfectly declare His praise.

APPLYING GOD'S WORD

Please ask the Holy Spirit to guide you:

Prepare! The reality is that we are engaged in spiritual warfare. Since we don't often see it explicitly it is easy to fall into complacency, but we need to put on the full armor of God (Eph. 6:10-20).

Extend Peace! While conflict with the world is inevitable, we need to be working towards peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is also important that while we should not be surprised by conflict with the world, neither should we seek it.

Pray! Ask the Lord to continue to expand our sense of wonder and praise for all His faithfulness.

The Life of Faith—Hebrews

Rooted in God's Promises & Running to New Jerusalem

The book of *Hebrews* was written to encourage and exhort God's people who were tempted to turn back from the gospel. They were reminded that the promise of salvation comes through the Son who reveals His Father's glory and provides Sabbath rest. This is the basis for the Christian hope as we await the New Jerusalem whose architect has secured our resurrection life in the eternal city of peace.

Sermon Notes and Daily Devotional
First Congregational Church of Woodstock

Pastor Doug Warren
May 26th, 2019

Morning Service:

Genesis 25: 19 – 34

Kingdom Rivalry

1. God Continues to Develop the Line of Promise.
2. The Resultant Division Brings Conflict.
3. God Provides the Promised Heir in Despite of Our Weakness.

From the beginning God has promised to bring a "seed of the woman" who would redeem us from our slavery to sin and death. He narrowed the search for this promised child through calling Abraham and telling him that the promise would come through his child with Sarah—Isaac. We see that advanced in this passage as God blesses Isaac and Rebekah with twins. But the conflict intensifies through their rivalry pointing to the Prince of Peace who would come through the line of the birthright.

Evening Service:

Hebrews 4: 1 – 11

There Remains a Sabbath Rest for God's People

1. We Must Face Our Fears.
2. Rest Comes through Trusting Christ's Work.
3. What Does It Look Like for Us to Enter God's Rest?

There remains a Sabbath-rest for the people of God. Based on this reality we are exhorted to be careful (to fear) that we not miss it. How does this square with our security in Christ? It is the fruit of trusting in the finished work of our Savior.

Taking Gathered Worship Home

This is more than a story about *sibling rivalry*. Twins, Esau and Jacob, are rivals not just for their parents' affection, they are part of demonstrating God's faithfulness in providing the promised line that will lead to the Messiah and humanity's redemption from death.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to meet with Jesus. Ask Christ to teach us His ways that we may walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday AM

READ **Genesis 25:19-34**. DISCUSS, Why is there so much conflict between the world and God's people? How do you handle that conflict in your daily life? How are you trusting Christ in it? PRAY for God to teach us the fullness of His promises and how they have been secured by Christ.

Sunday PM

READ today's passage: **Hebrews 4:1-11**. DISCUSS, What is this Sabbath rest? PRAISE Christ for being the Lord of our Sabbath.

Monday

READ **Genesis 25:19-23**. DISCUSS, How does Isaac respond to Rebekah's barrenness? How does Rebekah respond to the hardship of a difficult pregnancy? PRAY for God to help us turn to Him in our need. EXTEND His grace to someone today. Show them the grace Christ has lavished upon you. PRAY for Christ's comfort for our neighbors.

Tuesday

READ **Genesis 25:24-26**. DISCUSS, Has there been anything for which you have prayed for forty years? How do we trust God while we wait a long time? Esau and Jacob seem a very odd answer to prayer. What do you do when God answers your prayers with something you did not expect? PRAY, "Lord, teach us to trust You while we wait. Enable us to delight in You when the things we most want are kept from us. Enliven us to walk by faith in Christ!"

Wednesday

READ **Genesis 25:27-28**. DISCUSS, How do you handle favoritism? Who tend to be your favorites? Why? PRAY, Ask God to radically transform your understanding of His promises so that no one could mistake the fact that you are trusting in Christ to raise you from the dead.

Thursday

READ **Genesis 25:29-34**. DISCUSS, How does Esau despise his birthright? How does his priority of life now reveal a lack of trust in God and the resurrection? PRAY, "Jesus, help us to trust in You and Your faithfulness in fulfilling all Your promises. Teach us to believe what You tell us more than our own eyes."

Friday

READ **Genesis 25:19-34**. DISCUSS, How have you been learning from this passage this week? PRAY, "Lord, God of the Covenant, You have shown Yourself to be faithful. Again and again You heard the prayers of our mothers and fathers in the faith and lovingly cared for them, just as You promised. Yet, we like them, often despair and distrust You. Teach us to trust You. Enable us to demonstrate that faith in how we live together as a community at FCCW. Grant grace to our neighbors that they too might see You in all Your glory and rejoice in Christ.

Saturday

PREPARE today for the gathered worship service tomorrow. Do what you can today so that you will be less hurried tomorrow. Please pray specifically for our worship service and for the Holy Spirit to guide us together.

READ **Genesis 26:1-35**. Come to worship tomorrow expecting to hear from God through His Word and to learn more about our God together. Pray for God's glory to be more and more manifested in the Woodstock area. Pray that He will use us to extend His grace as we celebrate it together.