

### Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.

Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!

Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

### Agenda for Group Time

Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)

Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)

Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)

Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

**Icebreaker** Where are you in your family's birth order? What way did this most affect you?

Read Genesis 47:28-48:22

Not a Victim, but a sheep

What is Jacob's attitude towards life like in this passage? How is it different from his attitude in previous parts of the story?

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We see that Jacob's attitude is not because he's forgotten his pain, but in spite of it (v7). What reasons does he give for his happiness?

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In Jacob's life, as in ours, we sometimes have unbiblical, unhealthy responses to suffering. Do any of these resonate with you?

- When life gets tough, I pretend like nothing's happening, or that I'm so strong it doesn't affect me
- When life gets tough, I focus a lot on how unfair things are for me
- When life gets tough, I complain, and want other people to acknowledge how hard my life is
- I'm actually perfect, and have never done any of these
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Jacob makes Joseph swear to bury him in the promised land because he knows that God's providence is greater than even his life. How does knowing God's providence stands firm most help in suffering?

- It reminds me that my problems are for my own benefit- to make me more like Christ
- it reminds me that my mission stays the same in hardship
- It reminds me that the best is yet to come
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

As Jacob reflects on his life, he sees the way providence has already worked in his life. As you look back on your own life, how has God blessed you and strengthened you in hardship?

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Martyn Lloyd Jones says there are many men who live well who do not die victoriously. What does it take to die victoriously?

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Not our way, but His

Jacob blesses the "wrong" son, reversing his blessing by giving the younger the better blessing. Has this happened before? What do you make of that?

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Christ is a new and better Adam, how does this "Younger Brother" provide the ultimate overturn?

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God uses the weak to shame the strong. When have you seen God use weak people to accomplish spectacular work?

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We remember that God's power is made perfect in our weakness.

God has made many ways to turn to Him in our weakness. Which of these ways do you find easy to meet with God? Which ones do you find difficult? Why?

- Coming to God in prayer
- Meeting God in His word
- Assembling as God's people in worship

Work It Out!

One thing I'll do differently because of this sermon:

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