

Wrestling with God

Questions to discuss or think about

1. When crisis hits, what is your typical response? Are you a “thinker” or someone who moves immediate to action? What is the value of each type of response?

An example of response in crisis and how God deals with us in crisis is found in the story of Jacob in Genesis 32. In this chapter, Jacob is returning home and faces the daunting task of meeting up with his older brother, Esau, who the last time he saw him (20 years previously) had promised to kill him.

2. Read Genesis 32:1-8. Describe the crisis that is facing Jacob. What are some things he might have been thinking?

Jacob does three things in response to this crisis.

3. Read Genesis 32:9-12. What does Jacob do first? Why do you think crisis motivates many people to turn to God? What does this reveal about what Jacob believes in this moment?
4. Read Genesis 32:13-21. What is the second thing Jacob does? Do you think this is motivated by fear or by simply being smart? Why is taking action important in any crisis we might personally face?
5. When we face a personal crisis, what problems arise if we focus on trying to alleviate the problems without wrestling through our thoughts and feelings with God? What problems arise if we are introspective without considering what actions we might need to take?
6. Read Genesis 32:22-32. The last thing Jacob does is spend a night alone. What happens as he does this?
7. What does Jacob realize about his opponent as morning arrives?
8. Jacob pleads for a blessing from God and won't let go until he does. What does this say about how we deal with God when we are in crisis? What does it say about God that he was willing to physically wrestle with Jacob?
9. Jacob comes out of his encounter with a) a new name/identity; and b) a limp. Why is this picture of identity and brokenness together so important?
10. Consider a current or recent crisis that you faced in your life personally. How can you cooperate with what God is doing in that crisis in order to not waste the experience?

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Kids Resources

Read a story together

Find a children's bible online or one from home and pick a story to read together. To make it more interactive, after you read the story once, read it again and assign everyone a part in the story and act it out together. Use dramatic noises and actions.

Coloring Page

For those that like to color, the following website has hundreds of printable bible story coloring pages.

<https://ministry-to-children.com/bible-coloring-pages/>

Game – “ZONK”

For those that have older children, you can download the attachments to create a fun game that we have used with kids in the past as a competitive trivia game.