

July 9 & 10, 2022

Outrageous. How do we deal with the outrageous in our family story? Do we ignore those terrible family sins (act as if they just are not there)? Do we cancel those family members who tarnish our story? Do we remove them from the family tree?

When my wife and I observe our family trees, we can see threads of bitterness, addiction, fear, favoritism, spiritual pride, and a poverty mentality. How do we deal with those aspects of our family story that we would like to hide? What do we do when we find these themes in our own personal stories?

In chapter 26, we have an apparent interlude in the Jacob story, but this chapter is included for a reason. It opens a window into Jacob's family of origin. It ties the Jacob story to Grandpa Abraham and father Isaac. It reminds us that we are all born into a larger story.

As Paul wrote in **Romans 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.** The Jacob story instructs us.

- Each generation must learn to exercise faith (often tested in crisis).
- Each generation must acknowledge its sin (repent and change).
- Each generation must re-dig the faith wells of its forefathers.
- Each generation must hear from God and learn to worship.
- Each generation must learn to trust God's faithfulness to His word.

Questions for Reflection:

- Are there sinful patterns in your family story that you see in your own life? Acknowledge your sin, confess it to God, and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you toward change. You may want to request the help of a trusted pastor or friend.
- Are there wells of faith in your family story that you need to acknowledge, honor, and draw from? How will you draw from those wells?

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Please continue to pray for the elders.

If you wish to contact an elder, please email elders@willingdon.org.