



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

Faith and Playing God!

Genesis 30:1-43

Message #32 of 50 – S932

Sermon given on February 14, 2021

@ Calvary Chapel French Valley, Murrieta, CA



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Faith and Playing God!

Genesis 30:1-43

Opening Comments

- Good morning – we will be in **Genesis 30**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- Does anyone here think they are God? Almighty sovereign of the universe – Creator of heaven and earth?
- If anyone did believe that we would think they had lost their mind, right?
- There is only one God and I am not Him – neither are you!
- Unfortunately, sometimes people act like that is not true – they try to play God
- If God isn't moving fast enough or in the right way, they assume God needs their help, or that He doesn't care enough to get involved
- They do what they think is best
- We see that going on in our text for today
- God's sovereign providential power can take whatever mess we make in our lives and make something good out of it
- But it would be better for us and those around us if we trusted God
- As we go through this text today, ask God to reveal where you might be trying to play God in your life
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us be real with Him and ourselves
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Faith and Playing God!**
- Chapter 29 ended with Leah giving Jacob four sons
- That was a problem for sister/wife Rachel
- Jacob loved Rachel, not Leah – Leah hoped four sons would make Jacob love her more than Rachel – it didn't
- Leah wanted what Rachel had – Jacob's love
- Rachel wanted what Leah had – children

- **Genesis 30:1**

- Envy or jealousy is a sin – it will later be codified as the Tenth Commandment as coveting **Exodus 20:17**

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor's.

- Rachel is in a competition with Leah and Leah is ahead four to zero
- So, naturally, she tells her husband to fix it
- As an aside, she tells Jacob to give her children or she will die
- God will open her womb, but as she is giving birth to her second child, Benjamin, she will die

- **Genesis 30:2**

- Rachel has an emptiness inside of her that she believes only children will fill
- God creates in every person a need that only He can fill.
- There are many parallels in Rachel's story with her mother-in-law Rebekah

- Rebekah was barren – responded differently **Genesis 25:21**

Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

- Rachel then looks to her culture and finds an answer

- **Genesis 30:3-8**

- This is the same thing Jacob's grandparents did with Hagar Sarah's maid – produced Ishmael
- This was perfectly normal in their culture
- But it was a human answer to a spiritual problem
- Rachel felt that she needed to have children – the need consumed her
- God allows needs to exist in our life for many reasons
- First – so that we never forget that we need God
- Second – so that we learn not to trust in ourselves or what we can see
- Third - so that we get to know Him better through His grace
- All our needs are meant to draw us closer to God
- Rachel uses the cultural practice of providing a surrogate to obtain children
- She is playing God – if she can't get what she wants from God – she'll just have to handle it herself

- In her competition with her sister – she is catching up
- Leah sees this happening and thinks – two can play this game
- **Genesis 30:9-13**
- Both Rachel and Leah are playing God here
- And what we often forget is that our sinful, faithless actions have consequences
- Others are affected by our actions
- Bilhah and Zilpah are used as baby-mommas for Rachel and Leah
- They are the third and fourth wives of Jacob – no husbands for themselves
- And what’s up with Jacob – He knows God – God made promises to him **Genesis 28:13b-15**

I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.

- He seems to be a passive participant in this
- Maybe trying to maintain some kind of peace in his dysfunctional family **Matthew 5:9**

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

- Guys, here is something you need to know – God is not looking for peace at any cost in your family
- What God desires in your life, marriage, and family is holiness
- There is no peace, or happiness, or joy without holiness
- Next, we see there was no peace in Jacob’s household

- **Genesis 30:14-15**

- This part is a little weird
- The mandrake is a plant whose root can resemble a man
- It is fairly toxic – lot of superstition connected to it – used in occult
- One belief was that it would aid in fertility
- Rachel is still playing God – she will do what God is not doing
- The two children she got through Bilhah didn’t satisfy her need
- Leah claims that Rachel has taken away her husband Jacob

- She must have forgotten that she conspired with her father Laban to deceive Jacob
- **Genesis 30:16-21**
- Again, Jacob appears to play a passive role in his family drama
- Leah still believes that by giving Jacob sons that he will love her instead of Rachel
- Leah is playing God – only He can change the human heart
- Leah now has six sons and a daughter and Jacob still doesn't love her as he loves Rachel
- **Genesis 30:22-24**
- God had always intended to give Rachel children
- But she was not willing to wait in faith for Him to act
- 'God remembered Rachel' = God chose that time to act
- 'taken away my reproach' – It was shameful in that culture not to be able to bear children
- She was struggling with waiting for God because of how other people were looking at her – maybe her sister using it to torment her
- The focus turns back to Jacob
- **Genesis 30:25-26**
- Jacob served seven years so that he could marry Rachel
- Laban deceived him and substituted Leah
- Jacob served another seven years for Rachel
- His fourteen years of service are completed, and it is time for him to take his family and go home to the land of his father
- **Genesis 30:27-28**
- God had promised to bless Jacob and Laban could see that God was doing that and Laban was benefitting from God's blessing of Jacob
- Wants Jacob to stay because he wants to keep being blessed because of Jacob
- What Jacob does next is a little strange to me
- **Genesis 30:29-36**
- Jacob's father is rich
- And because he had obtained the birthright, he was set to inherit two-thirds of all his father possessed
- He didn't need to do this

- Jacob is playing God – God promised to prosper him
 - But up to this point all he has is his dysfunctional family – four wives – two of them are sisters and the other two are the servants of the sister-wives
 - He also has eleven sons and a daughter
 - And he will delay his departure to return home for another six years
 - **Genesis 30:37-43**
 - Jacob is practicing selective breeding, though with a superstitious twist
 - And it does not appear that he is being very honorable about it
 - **Closing: Faith and Playing God!**
 - Jacob, Leah, and Rachel are doing what seemed right to them
 - While there is an acknowledgment of God, no one seems to be seeking Him or His will
 - God still chooses to pour out His grace upon them
 - Proving once again that God’s grace is not dependent upon our faithfulness
 - The difference between Jacob and us is this – the Bible
 - Jacob had a radical encounter with the living God, but he didn’t have the Holy Spirit living in him
 - Jacob had the promises of God, but he didn’t have the full canon of Scripture to teach him how to serve, follow, and please God
 - When Jacob, Leah, and Rachel acted in a way that played God, it was from ignorance – they didn’t know
 - Because they didn’t know they did what they thought was right
 - The Bible teaches us clearly that God doesn’t think the same way we do **Isaiah 55:8-9**
- “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”**
- If you do what you think is best – it probably isn’t!
 - God Gave us the Bible so that we would not be ignorant of what He wants us to know
 - And He gave us the Holy Spirit so that we can receive what the Bible says

- And He gave us Spirit-filled Bible teachers so that we can understand Him and His plan for our lives
- The key to living a good life – a life that glorifies God, blesses others, and grows faith is letting God be God
- Three quick things to learn to **Let God be God!**
- First – **Know Him!**
- One of the reasons people try to play God in their lives is because they don't know God as well as they should
- Get to know Him in His Word
- Second – **Love Him!**
- One of the things we learn as we get to know God is how much He loves us
- We learn to let God be God by loving what God loves and hating what God hates - God loves all people and He hates all sin
- Third – **Follow Him!**
- In our account today, Jacob, Leah, and Rachel are doing what they think is best
- To let God be God – seek Him and do what He wants – every time
- The best life you can live is the one where you let God be God in everything
- Doesn't come naturally – the natural man or woman does what they think is best – they play God in their lives
- You have what you need to learn to let God be God
- Now you just need to surrender your will to Him and let the Holy Spirit teach you
- **Invitation/Prayer!**
- Pastor Randy is going to lead us in Communion