

MY NAME IS CHRISTIAN

INTRODUCTION

We have just completed our month of dedication and sanctification. The Lord has been at work rebuilding our lives as He did in the days of Nehemiah.

When God works in our lives, change comes. He changes us from the inside out and He turns things right side up. In fact, the word of God is clear that God is in the business of changing lives. We may be more familiar with the word "Transformation".

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV) But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

God's transformation in our lives is a progressive work, but sometimes, we need a breakthrough. Sometimes we need something in our lives or some situation we are facing to change urgently. God can do that for us, but we need to push through for that change to take place.

In today's message we will learn:

- How God is able to change/transform people.
- What we need to do to enable God's change/transformation to take place in our lives.

MESSAGE

Genesis 32:24-28 (NKJV) Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. 25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. 26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" 27 So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." 28 And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."

WE NEED TO IDENTIFY THE REAL PROBLEM

- Jacob was in a difficult situation.
- Esau was coming with 400 armed men. Jacob had stolen his inheritance. The only way Esau could get his inheritance back was if he were to kill Jacob and his entire bloodline so that Esau would once again be the next heir in line to inherit Abraham's fortunes.
- Jacob **was afraid for his family, his future, his life**. He was absolutely desperate.

- This account begins with Jacob crying out to God for help with Esau... He said "God help me with Esau".
- **He saw his problem as Esau.**

But God saw something that Jacob did not see – **the real problem was Jacob!**

Sometimes we need to realise that **our problems are not everyone else in our** lives or our circumstances and situations. The root of our problems is us!

- It's easy for God to handle the Esau's in our lives. People, circumstances or situations.
- But we need to realise that God really wants to deal with us and sometimes He allows situations in our lives so that He can deal with us!
- Our problem is not too much Esau in our lives, but too much Jacob (self).

Today God wants to work with us and help us deal with the Jacob (self) in our lives.

- God wants to transform us.
- He wants to change us like He did with Jacob.
- **We know there is power in words and also in a person's name!**
- God changed his name from Jacob (supplanter, grabber of the heel, trickster), to Israel, which means "**prince of God**, to rule, be strong, have **authority over**".

Genesis 32:28 (KJV) And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for **as a prince hast thou power with God and with men**, and hast prevailed.

- As a prince, Israel (Jacob) **had power with God and with Man.**
- That power does not only mean strength, **but it also means favour** – as a prince!

...but Jacob first had to say this "**I will not let You go unless You bless me!**"

Because Jacob prevailed and would not let go. God blessed him and gave Him "**Power and favour**" **with God and with man!**

God has a plan for each one of our lives – He wants to bless us by grant us power and favour to do that which He has in store for us.

- Even when the enemy attacks,
- Even when people are unkind,
- Even when we are facing struggles,

If we are willing to press through and prevail with God, His blessing will be upon us and grant us the power and favour we need to overcome in every situation.

IT WILL TAKE WEeping AND WRESTLING

Hosea 12:4 (AMP) He wrestled with the angel and prevailed; He wept [in repentance] and sought His favour. He met Him at Bethel And there God spoke with [him and through him with] us—

Hosea says Jacob wrestled and wept! **Jacob was dealing with something here! He was repenting**, he took his eyes off of blaming Esau for his problems and repented!

We also need to come before the Lord with a repentant attitude if we want to claim our blessing:

- Are we desperate enough to come before the Lord with weeping and repentance?
- As men are we willing to wrestle with God on behalf of our families like Jacob did?
- Jacob was so desperate that he would not let go – the angel was much more powerful than Jacob, but he would not let go.
- Shirley preached about claiming our inheritance – how hard are we willing to fight for our health, our families, our finances, our spiritual well-being.
- When things are not right in our lives, are we prepared to **hold on to God until we get the victory**, or have we given up?

Are we **desperate enough to do a desperate thing** and go deep with God and get victory. **This will take getting serious with God!**

God could have killed Jacob, but He didn't want to – He wanted Jacob to grow in character! He let Jacob carry on fighting so that Jacob **could grow in character and let go of Jacob**.

- We are not prone to change when all is going well, when we are comfortable. Sometimes God forces us to "Get off the porch".
- God is more interested in our character than in our comfort.
- He will allow us to face things so that He can build our character.

God wants to get the Keith out of me so that I can **reach my full potential** in Him! He wants to bring me to the place where I have power and favour with God and with man!

DON'T LET GO UNTIL GOD BLESSES YOU

We need to become desperate for the blessing of God. Sometimes we need to be more aggressive and say **"I won't let go"**.

- Having power and favour with God and man means we must refuse to let go.

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

Jacob had a history of lying about who he was – that is how he fooled his aged, dying father into giving him Esau’s inheritance and blessing. When Abraham asked which son he was, he said “I am Esau, your firstborn”.

There is a reason the Angel asked Jacob “what is your name?” because the last time Jacob had asked for a blessing, he had lied.

- Jacob didn’t admit that he was a deceiver, a liar and a manipulator.
- Jacob didn’t admit that he was taking his brother’s birthright.
- It led to Jacob himself being deceived by his father-in-law.
- It led to Esau coming with 400 warriors.

God was testing to see if Jacob, after struggling all night with him, was still plagued by his character flaw of lying and deception, but this time Jacob answered, “I am Jacob”.

When Jacob told the angel his name, the breakthrough came! God blessed him:

- “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel”
- You will have power and favour with God.
- You will have power and favour with man!

When Jacob walked away, he had a different name, he had a different future, **he was not the same person that had started wrestling with God**. Even his walk was different, he had a limp!

God wants to do the same for you and I today! How long do we have to struggle with the same things over and over and over. **God wants to change our future too!**

But the choice remains with us – are we willing to prevail until we get the victory?

- **Are we willing to be honest with God about our character flaws and weaknesses?**
- Are we willing to do what it takes to give us power and favour with God and man?

Inside of each of our lives is a Jacob waiting to become an Israel, a Saul waiting to become a Paul, **a Keith waiting to become Christian!**

- God wants to rename “drug addict and porn addict”, Christian.
- God wants to rename “Depressed”, Christian.
- God is wanting to rename “Grumpy” and “Angry” and “Bitter”, Christian.

The title of this message today is “MY NAME IS CHRISTIAN”.

Are we willing to get serious enough with God so that He will change us so dramatically that all the blessings, **power and favour with God and man** that are linked to the name "CHRISTIAN", (Christian means "little anointed one") can be released into our lives?

CONCLUSION

God is busy changing each one of us from glory to glory in Him. He has an unstoppable blessing for each one of our lives.

- We need to realise that often the problem is not someone or something else, it's us.
- We need to be willing to be desperate and honest so that we can get our breakthrough.
- We must be willing to not let go!

Are we willing to fight for our blessing? This blessing can be called upon daily give us power and favour with God and with man.

God has a new name for us today - our name is "CHRISTIAN".

The challenge today is to pray daily from now on, "Father, give me power and favour with You and with man, help me to live out the characteristics that are linked to my new name "Christian".

Adapted from a message by Jentezen Franklin