Sermon Series: Fanning the Flames
Sermon Title: I'm Not Leaving the Same – October 18, 2026
Scripture: Genesis 32:22–31 (NIV)
Key Verse: Genesis 32:28 (NIV)

Main Scripture

Genesis 32:28 (NIV)

“Then the man said, ‘Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.’”

Monday Mindset

When we have a true encounter with God, something in our lives should be different than it was before.

Overview

In Genesis 32, Jacob is preparing to face his brother Esau after years of separation. He is uncertain about what will happen and afraid of what may be waiting for him. But before Jacob encounters his brother, he has an encounter with God.

That night, Jacob wrestles until daybreak. During the encounter, he is confronted with his identity, receives a new name, and leaves with a limp that reminds us that something significant has happened.

Jacob's story teaches us that God does not simply meet us to make us feel better for a moment. He meets us to transform who we are and how we live.

Point 1: Make Room for God

Scripture

Genesis 32:24 (NIV)

“So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak.”

Reflection

Before Jacob's life-changing encounter, he found himself alone. Away from his family, possessions, and distractions, Jacob experienced something that would forever change his life.

Sometimes our lives become so busy that we leave very little room for God. We make time for responsibilities, relationships, entertainment, and everything else that demands our attention, but neglect the quiet moments when we can focus on Him.

Making room for God means intentionally creating space to pray, listen, reflect, and allow Him to work within us.

Reflection Questions

Am I making enough room for God in my daily life?

What distractions are keeping me from spending meaningful time with God?

When was the last time I spent quiet time alone with God?

This Week's Application

Set aside intentional time to be alone with God.

Remove distractions that interfere with your spiritual growth.

Make spending time with God a priority.

Point 2: Be Honest with God

Scripture

Genesis 32:27 (NIV)

“The man asked him, ‘What is your name?’ ‘Jacob,’ he answered.”

Reflection

During the encounter, Jacob was asked a simple question: “What is your name?” His answer required him to acknowledge who he was.

Jacob's name was connected to a history of deception and manipulation. Before receiving a new name, he had to acknowledge the name he had been carrying.

We cannot experience meaningful transformation while refusing to acknowledge the things within us that need to change. Sometimes we want God to change our circumstances without allowing Him to confront our attitudes, habits, motives, and behaviors.

Being honest with God means acknowledging not only what is happening around us, but also what needs to change within us.

Reflection Questions

What is something about myself that I need to be honest with God about?

Am I asking God to change my circumstances while avoiding changes in my own life?

What attitude or habit might God be challenging me to change?

This Week's Application

Be honest with God about areas where you need to grow.

Acknowledge habits and attitudes that need to change.

Allow God to work on you, not just your circumstances.

Point 3: Walk Differently After Encountering God

Scripture

Genesis 32:31 (NIV)

“The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.”

Reflection

Jacob entered the encounter one way, but he left differently. He received a new name, and the limp he carried was a visible reminder that something had happened during the night.

His encounter with God was not simply an emotional experience. It marked a turning point in his life.

The same should be true for us. We can experience powerful worship services, meaningful prayer, and moments when we feel especially close to God. But the true impact of those encounters should be reflected in how we live afterward.

If we have genuinely encountered God, something should begin to change in our attitudes, our decisions, our relationships, and the way we treat others.

Reflection Questions

What has changed in my life because of my relationship with God?

Do my actions reflect the spiritual experiences I have had?

What do I need to start doing differently after encountering God?

This Week's Application

Put into practice what God has been teaching you.

Make changes that reflect your spiritual growth.

Let others see God's work in you through how you live.

Living It Out This Week

Make room for God in your daily life.

Be honest about what needs to change within you.

Let your actions reflect your encounter with God.

Pastoral Encouragement

There are moments when we come to God carrying fears, frustrations, disappointments, and things we desperately want Him to change. And while God certainly cares about what we are going through, He is also concerned about who we are becoming. Jacob came into that encounter worried about what was ahead of him, but God used that moment to deal with what was within him. And be encouraged, because the same God who met Jacob that night is still able to meet us right where we are. No matter what your past looks like, what mistakes you have made, or what struggles you may be facing, God is still able to transform your life.

Closing Prayer

Lord, thank You for meeting us right where we are. Help us make room for Your presence, become honest about the things within us that need to change, and allow our encounters with You to transform how we live. Work on our hearts, our attitudes, and our habits so that our lives reflect Your presence. May we never be satisfied with simply feeling Your presence without being changed by it. In Jesus' name, Amen.