

# REACH OUT AND TOUCH PRISON MINISTRY

## BIBLE STUDY - SERIES 2 - LESSON #11

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ I.D.# \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JACOB: A CHANGED NATURE

**DEFINITION: CHANGE:** To make the form, nature, content, future course of (something) different from what it is, or from what it would be, if it were left alone; different from before; transform

**NATURE:** The basic quality of someone or something; basic character of a person; the qualities that makes up someone's personality; someone's reputation

**MEMORY VERSE:** "This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" (2 Corinthians 5:17) See King James Version also.

- 1) Jacob's story is told in Genesis Chapters 25-50. In **Genesis Chapter 32 (Read)** a transformation took place in Jacob's life. Have you had such an encounter with God that it changed your life forever? Share briefly your testimony how you came to know God.

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- 2) What kind of nature (characteristics) did Jacob possess before God changed his life? Name briefly a few things that he did:

**Genesis 25:29-34** \_\_\_\_\_

**Genesis 27:1-29** \_\_\_\_\_

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- 3) When Jacob sought God in prayer, he came face to face with who he was (his true nature) and what he had done. What was Jacob's attitude in his approach to God?

**Genesis 32:9-12:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- 4) Separation from people often allows God the opportunity to show us who we are and our need for God to change our nature so that we can become who He created us to be.

Who was Jacob with when he "met" God? **Gen 32:22-24 (verse 24)** \_\_\_\_\_

5) Jacob wrestled with what appeared to be a man, but it was actually God (**Gen 32:28-30**). (this is called a theophany (“the-off-a-nee”) an appearance of God to a human being) Describe in your own words how long Jacob prayed, what did he ask God to do for him?

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6) After Jacob “wrestled with God” (prayed) his name was changed to “Israel” means “He who prevails with God” (“prevail” means to persuade someone to do something). Name one lesson that you can learn from Jacob’s determination to be changed.(Gen 35:9-11)

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7) After King David committed adultery and murder, he prayed for a changed nature in **Psalm 51 (read entire chapter)**. What did he ask God to do for him?

(verse 10) \_\_\_\_\_

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8) When we “come clean” before God and admit our need for him to change us, He will:

**Micah 7:19** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ezekiel 18:22** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ezekiel 36:26** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 John 1:9** \_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 6:14** \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any questions or struggles that you have that you would like to share with us to pray for you? Whatever is shared with us will be kept in strict confidence.

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**COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND RETURN IN THE ENVELOPE ATTACHED OR MAIL TO:**  
**REACH OUT AND TOUCH PRISON MINISTRY, P.O. BOX 120249, ST. ALBANS, NY 11412**

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## BIBLE STUDY - SERIES 2 - LESSON #11

### LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JACOB: A CHANGED NATURE

#### A. God Expects Us To Be Transformed.

God expects that, when we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we will be radically changed. In Romans 12:2 he tells us, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed (metamorphoo) by the renewing of your minds." This transformation is to be a metamorphosis, of a magnitude at least comparable to that by which a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. He expects us to become totally different.

Scripture uses many different images to express the change that should occur:

- We become "a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come" (2 Cor 5:17). It is almost as if we become a new species. Scripture speaks of the "first Adam" who was earthly and fell into sin, and the "second Adam" (Jesus Christ) who was sinless and holy (Rom 5:12-19; 1 Cor 15:44-49).
- We are "made new in the attitude of your minds" (Eph 4:23).
- We "put off your old self" and "put on the new self" (Eph 4:22,24; Col 3:9-10).
- We "live by the Spirit" and not by the flesh (Gal 5:16; Rom 8:13).
- We become "instruments of righteousness" rather than "instruments of wickedness" (Rom 6:13).
- We have "been buried with him through baptism into death" in order that "we may live a new life" (Rom 6:4).
- "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20).
- We have "been set free from sin and have become slaves to God" (Rom 6:22). We are no longer "slaves to sin, which leads to death", but have become "slaves to ... obedience, which leads to righteousness" (Rom 6:16).
- We are rescued ("translated" KJV) from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's son (Col. 1:13). Our citizenship and our allegiance have been changed.
- We have become adopted sons of God (John 1:12-13; Rom 8:15-16).
- We are "born again" (John 3:3, 5); born from above, of the spirit and not the flesh.

#### B. The Goal Of Transformation

1. **To become like God in character** (Eph 5:24), (Col 3:10). (2 Pet 1:4) (1 Cor 2:16; Phil 2:5)
2. **To live for the things that are unseen** (1 Cor 2:14) (2 Cor 4, 5) (2 Cor 4:18) (2 Cor 5:7)
3. **To live by the Spirit** (John 14:15) (1 Cor 3:16), (1 Cor 6:19). (Gal 5:16-18) (Gal 5:22).
4. **To be yielded to God** (Rom 6:13) (Rom 6:16-19) (Jas 4:7) (John 14:15)(1 John 5:2-3).

#### C. How Can We Achieve This Transformation?

The task of achieving such a transformation seems impossible. How can we acquire the character of God? But God always enables us to do what he calls on us to do. We can become like God in character because we have God in us. Jesus abides in us and we in him (John 15:1-8). He has given us the Holy Spirit to be in us forever (John 14:16-17; 1 Cor 3:16, 6:19). As we allow the Holy Spirit who is in us to control our soul and body, we can become like God in character. And he has given us the dunamis, miracle-working, power of the Holy Spirit, the same power in which Jesus ministered while here on earth (Acts 1:8), so that we can do all things through him who strengthens us (Phil 4:13). .

We need always to keep in mind two things about this transformation. First, It is a process. It does not happen all at once. We "are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory." We spend a lifetime learning how to live by the Spirit, live a new life. We must "work out", and keep on working out, our salvation with fear and trembling. We must "make every effort...to be holy" (Heb 12:14). We must submit, and keep on submitting, to God. Over and over and over we must "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Cor 10:5). Near the end of his life Paul did not consider that he had arrived (Phil 3:12).

1. **Believe** (Heb 11:6-11) (Jas 1:6-8)
2. **Choose** to (Deut 30, Deut. 19-20)
3. **Stay in God's word** (John 17:17) (Jas 1:21) (Col 3:16) (2 Tim 3:16) (Heb 4:12) (Matt 4:4) (John 17:3)
4. **Guard your thoughts** (Phil 4:8) (2 Cor 10:5)
5. **Pray** (Jas 1:5) (Jas 4:2) (Jas 5:16) (Mat 7:7).
6. **Persevere** (Luke 18:1) (Heb 12:1) " (Heb 6:11).
7. **Keep the vision** (Prov 29:18) (Mat 19:36), (Rom 5:17) (Phil 3:14)
8. **Resist the enemy**

There is an enemy who does not want us to succeed. His purpose is to "steal, kill and destroy" (John 10:10). If he cannot prevent us from being saved, he will try to keep us ineffective. He does not want us to take on the image of God for two reasons: (1) he hates God; (2) he knows that if we do take on the image of God we will be more powerful opponents. So he will do everything possible to distract, discourage and defeat.

We fight the enemy, not in our strength, but in God's. "Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power" (Eph 6:10). The weapons we fight with have "divine power" (2 Cor 10:3). "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says God (Zech 4:6). Jesus has given us "authority...over all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19), but it is only when we submit ourselves to God that the enemy will flee from us (Jas 4:7; compare Acts 19:13-16).

## **Bible Characters Whose Lives Were Transformed**

- Jacob a liar and thief (Genes 27:43) became a "prince" with the name Israel (Genesis 32:28).
- Joseph, spent approximately 16 years in prison, became the ruler in Egypt "to save much people alive" (Genesis 50:20).
- Moses the liar and murderer became Moses the Deliverer (Exodus 3:10).
- Gideon the fearful became Gideon the mighty man of valor (Judges 6:12).
- David the shepherd, adulterer, murderer, became David the giant-killer (1 Samuel 17:45), a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) and greatest king of Israel (2 Samuel 7:8).
- Zacchaeus the extortionist and dishonest tax collector became Zacchaeus the one whose home Jesus visited for dinner and generous benefactor (giver of gift or money (Luke 19:8).
- Ruth a poor widowed woman living in an ungodly land, became the wife of a rich man and gave birth to a son who was the great grandmother of King David and an ancestor of Jesus Christ
- Esther, an orphan adopted by her uncle became a Queen to a powerful King and was used by God to keep the nation of Israel from being destroyed (Esther Chapter 4)
- Peter a fisherman, denied Jesus 3 times (Mark 14:66-72) was unlearned, became the greatest preacher of the disciples, preached one sermon and 3,000 souls were saved (Acts 2:41)
- Saul the self-righteous Pharisee and persecutor of Christians (Acts 9:1) became Paul the Apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles (2 Timothy 1:11). Paul wrote 14 New Testament Books.