

Who Are You?
Genesis 32:22-29



Who Are You

- Most of you will know this song as the theme song to the television show CSI
 - They are able to identify the victim but mostly the perpetrator by connecting the simplest of clues together to develop the story of the event
 - It's like a giant jigsaw puzzle
 - But they always start with the question, "Who are you?"

Who Are You

- This is the question Jesus was often asked, **John 8:24-25 ESV**, 24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.” 25 So they said to him, “Who are you?”
- Every Biblical character could have been asked a similar question by God in various ways
 - Judas, who are you, when stating one is of the Devil?
 - Peter, who are you, after denying Jesus three times?
 - Moses, who are you, when talking to the burning not burning bush?

Who Are You

- And this question will be asked us several times over our Christian walk
- We must never forget we have an old sinful nature inside us fighting for dominance over our new sinless nature
 - We must choose to live by our new nature
 - But we easily slide into our old nature

Who Are You

- The biblical character we can clearly see this in is Jacob, his whole life was a struggle
 - **Genesis 25:22-23 NLT**, 22 But the two children struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the Lord about it. “Why is this happening to me?” she asked. 23 And the Lord told her, “The sons in your womb will become two nations. From the very beginning, the two nations will be rivals. One nation will be stronger than the other; and your older son will serve your younger son.”

Who Are You

- The biblical character we can clearly see this is Jacob, his whole life was a struggle
 - **Genesis 25:24-26 NLT**, 24 And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins! 25 The first one was very red at birth and covered with thick hair like a fur coat. So they named him Esau. 26 Then the other twin was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel. So they named him Jacob. *(He cheats, Trickster, Deceiver).*

Who Are You

- The biblical character we can clearly see this is Jacob, his whole life was a struggle
 - True to his name he manipulates Esau out of his birthright
 - With his mother's help they manipulate his father Isaac into giving Jacob his blessing
 - Esau is furious and threatens to kill Jacob, so he was sent away to his mother's brother name, Laban

Who Are You

- The biblical character we can clearly see this is Jacob, his whole life was a struggle
 - He goes with a blessing from God, **Genesis 28:15 ESV**, “15 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 promised you.”
 - Jacob has the blessing of God on his life now; this is who he is

Who Are You

- The biblical character we can clearly see this is Jacob, his whole life was a struggle
 - In his uncle Laban, Jacob discovered one whose deceptive skills were more talented than himself
 - Jacob worked for Laban 7 years to marry his daughter Rachel only to discover Laban's oldest daughter Leah in the marriage bed the next morning
 - Jacob worked another 7 years to be able to marry Rachel
 - Jacob worked another 4 years where God blessed him with much of Laban's herds

Who Are You

- The biblical character we can clearly see this is Jacob, his whole life was a struggle
 - **Genesis 31:6-7 NLT**, “6 You know how hard I have worked for your father, 7 but he has cheated me, changing my wages ten times.”

Who Are You

- The biblical character we can clearly see this is Jacob, his whole life was a struggle
 - Now Jacob is no longer favored by Laban and his sons
 - **Genesis 30:25 NLT**, 25 Soon after Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, “Please release me so I can go home to my own country. 26 Let me take my wives and children, for I have earned them by serving you, and let me be on my way. You certainly know how hard I have worked for you.”

Who Are You

- The biblical character we can clearly see this is Jacob, his whole life was a struggle
 - So Jacob must run away again
 - Jacob is always running from rather than running to
 - God gives him another promise
 - **Genesis 31:13 NLT**, “13 I am the God who appeared to you at Bethel, the place where you anointed the pillar of stone and made your vow to me. Now get ready and leave this country and return to the land of your birth.”

Who Are You

- Now Jacob finds himself in a situation he is unable to manipulate
 - Laban and his sons behind him
 - Esau and 400 of his men coming toward him in front
 - Still being Jacob, he sends Esau all sorts of gifts to soften him up, he separates his families into two groups in different location, and he is by himself just waiting
 - And God confronts Jacob with the most serious question of his life, “Who are you, Jacob?”

Scripture

- **Genesis 32:24-29 ESV**, 24 And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.
 - **Vs. 30** called God, **Hosea 12:4** call angel of the Lord
 - Sometimes during the hours Jacob must have began to realize this was no ordinary man
 - I wonder if Jacob began to wonder, “What do you want with me God?”
 - “Why are you doing this now God?”
 - But Jacob would not physically give up and let God take control of his life

Scripture

- **Genesis 32:24-29 ESV**, 25 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob (*Jacob would not give up*), he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him.
 - God let Jacob take himself to very end of his strength, hope, himself
 - The angel could have done this at any time, but Jacob had to be shown how very weak he really was
 - Now Jacob finds himself just hanging on to the angel with all his strength, that's all he could do

Scripture

- **Genesis 32:24-29 ESV**, 26 Then he said, “Let me go, for the day has broken.” (*It’s time to let go Jacob*) But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”
 - Jacob recognized his divine opponent and chose to abandon a lifelong habit of relying on his own cunning
 - By holding on, he was expressing desperate repentance, spiritual perseverance, and a total surrender to God's favor and protection over his uncertain future

Scripture

- **Genesis 32:24-29 ESV**, 27 And he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.”
 - Who are you, Jacob?
 - This is the second time in Scripture Jacob was asked his name
 - **Genesis 27:18-19 ESV**, 18 So he went in to his father and said, “My father.” And he said, “Here I am. Who are you, my son?”
19 Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn.”

Scripture

- **Genesis 32:24-29 ESV**, 27 And he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.”
 - Who are you, Jacob?
 - Not, “I am Jacob the great and mighty”
 - Not Jacob the blessed
 - Not Jacob the one in complete control of his life
 - I am Jacob the flawed (*honesty*)
 - I am Jacob the tricker, struggler, deceiver, schemer
 - Jacob had the blessing of God, but he needed to step into that blessing and make it his or become it

Scripture

- **Genesis 32:24-29 ESV**, 28 Then he said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven (*struggled*) with God and with men (*and yourself*), and have prevailed.” 29 Then Jacob asked him, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” (*You already know what it is*) And there he blessed him.
 - The name Jacob represents your old life of striving, trickery, and relying on his own wits
 - Your old way of looking at yourself
 - The new name Israel means "God strives," "One who wrestles with God," or "A prince with God"

Scripture

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 - Biblical Hebrew word Strives - refers to making an earnest, agonizing effort toward spiritual discipline
 - Biblical Hebrew word “prevailed” in this context means to overcome

Scripture

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 - You’ve struggled with your old nature, past, who you were and have now overcome it

Just like Jacob, every born-again child of God must step into their new identity

- **2nd Corinthians 5:17 NLT**, “This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”
 - Your past is washed away; the verdict of guilt is replaced by God's grace
 - Instead of viewing God as a distant judge, you are adopted into His family and can approach Him as a loving Father
 - As a child of God, you are a joint heir with Christ, meaning you share in His spiritual inheritance

Just like Jacob, every born-again child of God must step into their new identity

- Jacob has some things to learn about God
 - True blessing comes from or flow through Him
 - God is a promise giving God
 - God keeps His promises even when it appears He is absent, silent

Just like Jacob, every born-again child of God must step into their new identity

- Jacob had to come to terms with who he was and turn from it
 - “I am Jacob” and it hurt him to say it
 - He saw that in Laban’s life and identified it in his
 - That’s not who I want to be going forward
 - We call this repentance today

Jacob had to bow to God's presence and Lordship in his life

- We would call this salvation today
- Jacob finally prevailed with God when the power of his faith overcame the pain of his past
- There will be times in your life where the pain of your past will try and wrestle the peace of your present

Just like Jacob we have been given a new name reflecting our new identity

- **Revelation 2:17 ESV**, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.”
 - In ancient Greek and Roman courts, a white stone was cast by jurors to vote "not guilty"

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 - Winners of ancient athletic games were given a white stone inscribed with their name granting them entry to a special, exclusive awards banquet
 - Symbolizes complete acquittal of sin, an eternal identity, and a VIP admission ticket to heaven's victory banquet

Who Are You

- All great men and women of faith had to step into the person God had called them to be, to accomplish what He desired in their lives
 - Gideon, Moses, Paul
 - All through faith and humility
- So God is asking each of us this morning, “Who are you?”

Who Are You?
Genesis 32:22-29

