Looking for Love in the Wrong Places July 5, 2020

*Genesis 29:31-30:24 Series: How Jacob Became Israel*

As long as we get what we want and our idol is smiling upon us, it is easy for us to be oblivious to the power our idol has gained over us. – Iain M. Duguid

Intro: “I wanted to know what love is.” (Fifteen and Pregnant)

1. God seeks our love, even as we seek satisfaction in people.
2. God sought Leah’s love.

v. 31 *When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb …*

v. 32 *the LORD has looked upon my affliction*

v. 33 *the LORD has heard that I am hated*

1. But Leah sought her satisfaction in a husband.

v. 32 *she called his name Reuben*

v. 32 *now my husband will love me*

v. 34 *this time my husband will be attached to me*

1. Leah learned to find her satisfaction in the love of God, sort of.

v. 35 *This time I will praise the LORD.*

* How did God show His love to Leah?
* Why didn’t God show His love to Leah by making her husband love her more?
* How did Leah’s attitude change with the birth of her fourth child? Why might it be significant that this child was Judah, the one through whom the Messiah would be born?
* Have you ever had an experience that taught you to find your satisfaction in the love of God?

1. God seeks our love, even as we seek satisfaction in status.
2. Rachel tried to use her husband to gain status.

v. 1 *When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister.*

v. 1 *She said to Jacob, “Give me children, or I shall die!”*

1. Rachel tried to use her servant to gain status.

v. 3 *Here is my servant Bilhah; go in to her, so that she may give birth on my behalf …*

1. Rachel tried to use superstition to gain status.

v. 14 *Rachel said to Leah, “Please give me some of your son's mandrakes.”*

v. 15 *Then he may lie with you tonight in exchange for your son's mandrakes.*

Ecclesiastes 4:4 *Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of his neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.*

2 Corinthians 10:12 *But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.*

1. Rachel learned to rely on the love of God, sort of.

v. 22 *Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her*

v. 23 *She … said, “God has taken away my reproach.”*

v. 24 *And she called his name Joseph, saying, “May the LORD add to me another son!”*

* Rachel had everything that Leah wanted, and Leah had everything that Rachel wanted. Why weren’t they satisfied?
* What were some of the consequences of Rachel’s dissatisfaction in her relationships?
* Why didn’t God give Rachel children sooner?
* How is Rachel’s response in v. 24 somewhat unsatisfying?

1. God seeks our love, even as we seek satisfaction in comfort.
2. Even as God blesses him with sons, Jacob is completely passive in his responsibilities.

v. 2 *Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel*

v. 2 *Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?*

Genesis 25:21 *And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.*

1. Are you learning to find your satisfaction in the love of God?

Psalm 18:19 *he rescued me, because he delighted in me*

Luke 12:7 *Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

1 John 3:1 *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.*

Romans 5:8 *God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

* Jacob seems like a bystander in his family. What might he have done to help?
* What are some things a husband can do to avoid being passive in his home today?
* What has this passage taught you about how God can use positive and negative circumstances in our lives?
* What are some ways that we can grow in our satisfaction in the love of God?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Genesis 30:25-43.

Notes