## Genesis 35

Recovering from a stale relationship with God

# Where are we going?

- Obedience, through Faith, is the secret ingredient to overcoming a stale relationship with God.
- Removing idols means putting God in his proper place
- God's faithfulness and promises are true and are not dependent on our level of faith or our commitments. They are simple.
- God prepares us for the next stages

# Defining a Stale Relationship

- God is seen as an after-thought
- A spiritual mask covers your shame
- You become indifferent to righteousness
- You feel the freedom to live life your way
- You start to feel like He wouldn't take you back after all this time
  - Luke 11:15-32



#### The call to obedience

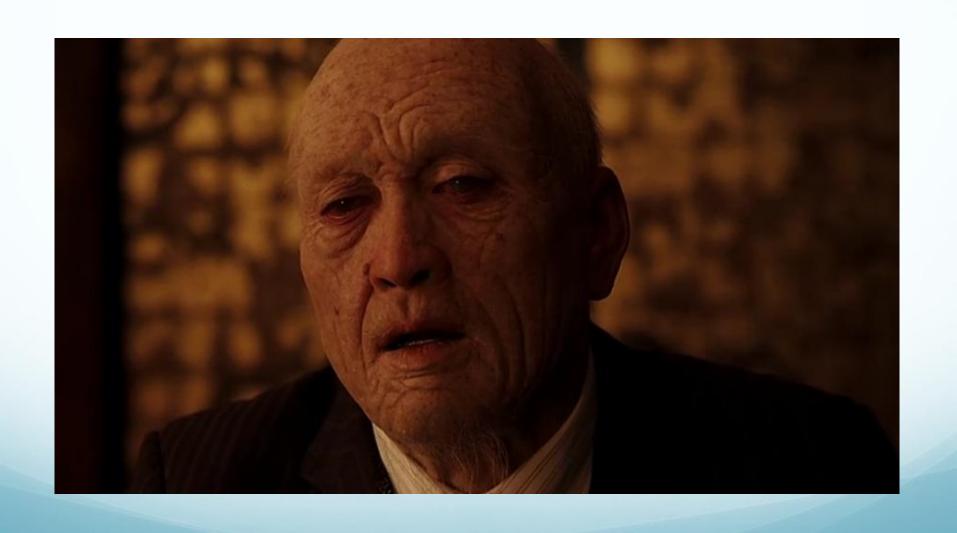
- Verse 1: God calls Jacob back to where their relationship (& faith) began, Bethel, and asks him to setup an alter there
- Verse 2: Jacob immediately obeys and prepares to meet God by asking his community to purify themselves from their idols. This infers they had idols and that Jacob was ok with it...

#### Idols in our lives

- Job
- Money/Security
- Family
- Fear
- Control
- Religiousity
- Social Status/Moral Achievements
- Contentment/Entertainment

#### Idols in our lives

- Acts 17:16-34
- Tim Keller says that an idol is:
  - Anything in your life, that is so central to your life, that you can't have a meaningful life if you lose it
    - When you say to yourself, "If I have that, then my life would have meaning, and if I would lose that, I don't know how I would live"
- Paul's Response: Verse 30



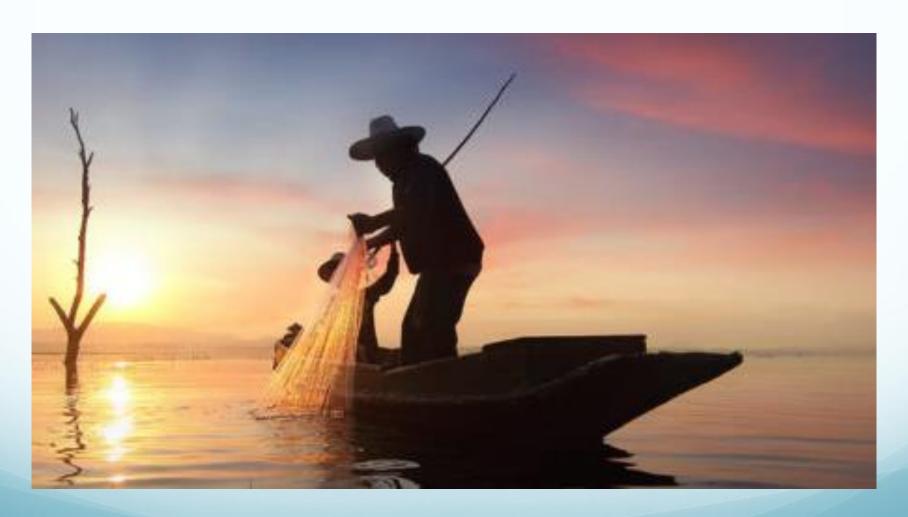
#### The Promises of God

- Genesis 28
  - I am the lord of Abraham and Isaac
  - I will give you land and descendants
  - There will be lots of descendants
  - All people on Earth will be blessed through you
  - I will not abandon you
- Genesis 35
  - I am the lord
  - Be fruitful and multiply
  - I will give you many descendants
  - I will give you the land
  - Kings will come from you\*

# God's promises to Sean

- Psalm 106/107
- 2 Peter 1:12-15
  - A reminder of good things

## The Mexican Fisherman



## The next stages

- Deborah Dies (The Oak of Weeping)
- Rachel Dies (Genesis 48:7)
- Reuben sleeps with Bilhah (Genesis 49:4)
- Isaac Dies

## Sean's next stages

- Fall Semester → maybe with a job?
- Fall Semester → with a kid!
- Job → more responsibility added?

### God on trial in our trials

Does God "test" Jacob's commitment to him? Or does God prepare Jacob for the hardships ahead? How do you view God's character in trials?

#### Conclusion

- Obedience, through Faith, is the secret ingredient to overcoming a stale relationship with God.
- Removing idols means putting God in his proper place
- God's faithfulness and promises are true and are not dependent on our level of faith or our commitments. They are simple.
- God prepares us for the next stages

## Discussion Questions

- Where is God asking you to take Faith in your life at the moment and what does obedience look like?
- What idols have replaced God in your life and how can you identify, repent from, remove, and then give God his proper place?
- What information and promises have God given you in the past that you need to go back to, rather than looking for the next great insight?
- Do you see God as preparing you for the next stage or as testing your commitment to him through trails?