

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE FOR THE WEEK OF 7/18/10

SERIES: NOW I KNOW—when life teaches you an unforgettable lesson about God (III)

Scripture: Genesis 32:22-32

1. Have you ever wrestled with God? What happened?

2. Read Romans 8:28, James 1:2, Philippians 4:4.

Are these passages telling us that wrestling with God in tough times is wrong?

Have you ever felt the pressure to put on a happy face, quote the expected verses, and say simple, Christian platitudes when you were confused, hurting, and upset with life and God? Can you think of a specific example from your life?

3. Talk together about Hebrews 5:7-10. What do we learn from Jesus' example? Are you uncomfortable with this image of a weeping, struggling Jesus?

Do you feel the freedom to open your heart completely to God even when what's in your heart isn't pretty?

4. A Jewish theologian writes:

"Since then (Jacob's wrestling match with God) wrestling with God has been at the core of the Jewish identity . . . This quality of confrontation and engagement with God, as opposed to pure submission, remains a distinguishing characteristic of Judaism."

Should wrestling with God also be a distinguishing characteristic of Christianity?

5. Jacob was blessed only after a long, dark night of wrestling with God? Have you ever discovered blessings on the other side of a "dark night of the soul" spent wrestling with God?

6. Summing it all up question: How does the story of Jacob and God wrestling say something about the kind of relationship God wants to have with each of us?