



LESSON 13

3rd and 4th Grade

Principle: God blesses beyond human ability when we walk with Him and put our trust in Him.

Humble reconciliation.

Scripture Reference: Genesis 30-33

Character(s): Jacob and Esau

ATTENTION VOLUNTEER: Today's lesson covers the topics of fear and forgiveness. Children from foster or adoptive homes or children who have experienced abuse or neglect of any kind could be very sensitive to this lesson. A child should not be forced or coerced into sharing a story unwillingly. There does not need to be the awkward silence waiting for a child to share if they are not ready. Should a child choose to share an experience of deep hurt, their response should be welcomed and heard, as well as communicated to the coach or children's director to further address the situation. Please don't hesitate to let your coach or children's director know if you need assistance at any time during this lesson.



PERSONAL PREPARATION: Before this weekend, spend some time reading through

Genesis 30-33. Jacob and Esau were both living independently of God when we left our last lesson. This weekend, we will see the heart change Jacob undergoes as he leaves his family to live with his Uncle Laban. He will work for Laban for 20 years, gaining lots of wealth for both Laban and himself, and then return to his homeland at God's command with the hope of reconciling with Esau. Jacob displays humility throughout the story, acknowledging God's faithfulness to him, submitting himself before God in prayer, and depending on God with his life. In reconciling with Esau, he humbly approached Esau in an effort to show realization of his sin. Esau provides us with an example of forgiveness through grace: he immediately forgave Jacob upon seeing him.

How do you humble yourself before God? Before others? Is there an area in your life where you have chosen not to humble yourself before God and put your trust in His plan? Is there someone you should forgive, or someone who you have hurt and you desire forgiveness? How do you see God's blessing in your life? Spend some time in prayer, asking God to humble your heart before Him.

Meditate on your need for God's saving grace, and the blessings you have received through trusting God with your life.

PLUG IN TIME - 5-10 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

Arrive early to check the supplies in the bin and review the lesson. Write today's principle on the whiteboard. Remember to greet all campers upon arrival; meet their parents; welcome and introduce all visitors. Create a welcoming cabin for all campers!

Broken Relationship

Give each camper a worksheet. This will be used many times throughout the lesson. Have them turn to "Broken Relationship" section and ask them to draw a picture or write the name of one person they are angry with and what made them angry. Offer suggestions to guide them in the right direction. (Brother/sister quarrels, neighbors that they are no longer playing with, a classmate who did something mean to them, etc.) Have each share about the situation.



BIG GROUP Time - 35-40 minutes

As you line up, remind campers we are going to have fun as an entire Camp Grace group! We are going to live out GRACE by **Glorifying God** through worship, **Respecting All Leaders**, and **Accepting Responsibility** to listen with attentive ears, minds, and hearts – fully **Celebrating Christ** with passion! We should **Encourage Others** to do the same, by not distracting them from their worship of God.

***Take your cabin flag to Big Group.**

The Bridge to Small Group

Today we are going to continue studying about Jacob. We will see Jacob turn from being independent of God to walking with Him, and the blessings he receives. We will also study the humble reconciliation between Jacob and Esau.

Small Group Time - 25-30 minutes

Getting Started

If your cabin did well in Big Group, acknowledge it. If not, take a couple of minutes to talk about how they can do better next time.

What did you learn in Big Group? Why did the staff member send all of those animals? (Sent them as a present to ask forgiveness.) How did the storyteller respond? (Forgave the staff member right away.)

In our last lesson, we learned about God blessing Isaac and Rebekah by giving them twin sons. What were their sons' names? Jacob and Esau. What were the differences between Jacob and Esau? Esau was the first-born son, was a hunter, and was loved by Isaac. Jacob was the younger son who enjoyed to cook, and was loved by Rachel. Jacob and Esau grew up into two very different men. What happened between them? Jacob was jealous of Esau, and tricked him into giving up the money and power that were his as the first-born son. Were either Jacob or Esau depending on God? No, both Jacob and Esau were living independently of God. Neither were living to bring glory to God.

Today we are going to continue in Genesis to see what happened between Jacob and Esau. After Jacob tricked Esau into giving up his birthright, Jacob then deceived Isaac into giving him the blessing that was meant for Esau. Isaac sent Jacob to live with Rebekah's brother, Laban, and to find a wife. Jacob was still living independent of God, but God began revealing Himself more to Jacob.

When Jacob got to the land where his Uncle Laban lives, he fell in love with one of Laban's daughters, Rachel. He worked for Laban as payment to marry Rachel, but Laban deceived him into marrying his other daughter Leah first, and then made him work more in order to marry Rachel. After Jacob worked for about 20 years, he had 12 children, and lots of wealth and livestock. Jacob recognized that God had been with him through all of that time, and when God told him in a dream to return to his homeland, Jacob obeyed. He and his entire household headed back to the land of Canaan. Let's begin in Genesis 32 [NLT].

Genesis 32:3-5

3 Then Jacob sent messengers ahead to his brother, Esau, who was living in the region of Seir in the land of Edom. 4 He told them, "Give this message to my master Esau: 'Humble greetings from your servant Jacob. Until now I have been living with Uncle Laban, 5 and now I own cattle, donkeys, flocks of sheep and goats, and many servants, both men and women. I have sent these messengers to inform my lord of my coming, hoping that you will be friendly to me.'"

Something had happened in Jacob that he wanted to alert Esau of his return. After all he has done to Esau and the hatred Esau had for him, he could have just returned without any notice and dealt with everything after he got back. But he desired reconciliation with Esau, and so he sent a message ahead to Esau out of humility and respect.

Genesis 32:6-12

6 After delivering the message, the messengers returned to Jacob and reported, "We met your brother, Esau, and he is already on his way to meet you—with an army of 400 men!" 7 Jacob was terrified at the news. He divided his household, along with the flocks and herds and camels, into two groups. 8 He thought, "If Esau meets one group and attacks it, perhaps the other group can escape." 9 Then Jacob prayed, "O God of my grandfather Abraham, and God of my father, Isaac—O Lord, you told me, 'Return to your own land and to your relatives.' And you promised me, 'I will treat you kindly.' 10 I am not worthy of all the unfailing love and faithfulness you have shown to me, your servant. When I left home and crossed the Jordan River, I owned nothing except a walking stick. Now my household fills two large camps! 11 O Lord, please rescue me from the hand of my brother, Esau. I am afraid that he is coming to attack me, along with my wives and children. 12 But you promised me, 'I will surely treat you kindly, and I will multiply your descendants until they become as numerous as the sands along the seashore—too many to count.'"

Trust in God



The purpose is for the campers to recognize an area in their life where they have not been trusting in God. They have the opportunity to choose to trust Him from now on.

Supplies:

Worksheet – “Trust in God” section (1 per camper)

Have campers find the “Trust in God” section of their worksheets. Talk through the “tie-it together” and give the campers an opportunity to recognize how they may not be putting their trust in God. Tell them to write down a prayer in the “Trust in God” section on their worksheets.

Tie It Together



Jacob learned that Esau was on his way to meet him with an army of 400 men. He was terrified because he thought Esau was seeking revenge. After dividing his household into two camps, what did Jacob do next? (Allow responses.) He prayed to God. Jacob has lived his whole life independently of God and trusted only in himself. Now we see Jacob turn to God and depend on Him through prayer. Jacob even recognized that he was not worthy of the love and faithfulness God had shown him. A change had happened in Jacob’s heart. He understood that if he put his faith and trust in God, the life God offered him was better than any life he could live on his own. How are you trusting in God with everything in your life? Is there something that you have not trusted God with? (Allow responses.) Spend some time thinking about something that worries you or brings you fear. Write down a prayer asking God to help you overcome this worry or fear by remembering that He loves you and is faithful to take care of you.

After praying to God, Jacob made camp for the night, and sent gifts ahead in different groups to meet Esau. This act of presenting gifts to someone of higher status was considered an act of respect, and showed humility on Jacob’s part. During the night, something happened to Jacob.

Genesis 32:24–31

24 This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. 25 When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob’s hip and wrenched it out of its socket. 26 Then the man said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!”

But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

27 “What is your name?” the man asked.

He replied, “Jacob.”

28 “Your name will no longer be Jacob,” the man told him. “From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won.”

29 “Please tell me your name,” Jacob said.

“Why do you want to know my name?” the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there.

30 Jacob named the place Peniel (which means “face of God”), for he said, “I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared.” 31 The sun was rising as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of the injury to his hip.

Jacob and the man struggled all night until the man touched Jacob’s hip and dislocated it. Jacob recognized the man as someone superior to him, and asked for a blessing. The man revealed Himself as God and changed Jacob’s name to Israel. “Israel” means “struggles with God.” Jacob had struggled with men his whole life, and now he had struggled with God. God injured Jacob in order to humble him and keep him mindful of God’s faithfulness in blessing and victory.

Let’s see how Esau reacts when he sees Jacob.

Genesis 33:1-3

1 Then Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming with his 400 men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and his two servant wives. 2 He put the servant wives and their children at the front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last. 3 Then Jacob went on ahead. As he approached his brother, he bowed to the ground seven times before him.

This act of bowing seven times (bowing, then moving a few steps closer, and continuing this sequence seven times) was a sign of great respect to Esau. Jacob was completely humbling himself before Esau and asking for forgiveness.

Let's take a look at what it means to humble ourselves.

Humble Jumble



The purpose of this activity is to give the campers a better understanding of humility.

Supplies:

Humble Jumble poster (1 per session)

Ask for a volunteer to read each verse reference out loud (if no camper volunteers, a teacher or student helper should do the reading). Help campers look up the verses, and then read each verse reference aloud and unscramble the letters to figure out the words to fill in the blanks for each reference.

Tie It Together



What did you find out about what it means to be humble? (Allow responses.) Being humble is to 1) love God and love others, 2) consider others more important, 3) lack pride, and 4) obey God's commandments. God wants us to love Him first, and then love others. When we love others and consider them more important, we are putting them above ourselves. Jesus is our great example of what it means to love God and love others. He gave up His life for our sake, so that our sins could be forgiven. Another part of humility is lacking pride. This means not feeling good about yourself for putting others first. Lastly, to be humble means obeying God's commandments. When we choose to obey God, we humble ourselves by showing that we do not trust in our own choices, but in what God wants for us and the plan He has. We have seen Jacob go from living his life for himself to humbling himself before God, and humbling himself before Esau in his hope for reconciliation.

Let's finish the story and see how Esau responds to Jacob.

Genesis 33:4

4 Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. And they both wept.

Esau's act of forgiveness towards Jacob was incredibly powerful. Esau could have continued hating Jacob for what he did, but Esau chose to forgive him through grace. Grace is being given something

you do not deserve. Jacob did not deserve Esau's forgiveness, but Esau chose to forgive Jacob and love him anyway. Esau is a great example to us in how to love others more than ourselves. God has blessed Jacob for his choice to trust in God and his desire to love Esau more than himself.

Steps of Forgiveness



The purpose is to show the campers the way God instructs us to seek forgiveness.

Supplies:

Worksheet – “Steps of Forgiveness” side (1 per camper)

Go over the six steps of forgiveness and have campers draw a line from what they should do to seek forgiveness to the numbered step at the bottom of the sheet.

1. Humble yourself
2. Recognize that your action is wrong (it is sin)
3. Accept responsibility (do not make excuses)
4. Ask your friend to forgive you
5. Ask God to forgive you
6. Accept God's forgiveness

Tie It Together



If you choose to put your faith and trust in Jesus as Lord, your sins have been forgiven by God. Because God has forgiven you, you can forgive others. God desires for us to have a heart filled with worship for Him, and part of worshiping Him means being able to forgive and seek forgiveness. Forgiveness can be a difficult choice to make when someone has done something to you. Why can it be difficult? (Allow responses.) It can be difficult to forgive someone because you think he or she does not deserve forgiveness. You may even think that person should be punished for what he or she did. But God calls us to forgive, because He forgave us when we did not deserve it.

It can also be a difficult thing to ask forgiveness if you have hurt someone else. You must first humble yourself and recognize that your actions were wrong. Next, you must accept responsibility by not making any excuses, and ask the person you hurt to forgive you. You can then ask God to forgive you. God will forgive you if you come before Him in repentance. Through learning to ask forgiveness, we also learn how to forgive those who hurt us.

Broken Relationship Prayer



The purpose is to focus on the campers' broken relationships and ask God to help them have the boldness and humility to take the steps to reconcile their friendships.

Supplies:

Worksheet – “Broken Relationship” section from earlier (1 per camper)

Have campers turn back to the “Broken Relationship” section of their worksheets and lead them in a

prayer of silent confession and agreement with God that they have sinned and have a broken relationship.

Father God, we come before you lifting up these hurt relationships. We know that we have sinned and do not deserve anything. We come before You now asking forgiveness. You are a God who is faithful to forgive us when we come to You. We thank You for the grace that You show us when You forgive us of our sins, and we pray now that we will have courage to ask those we have hurt to forgive us. Thank you for your Son, Jesus, and the life we have because of Him. Amen.



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