



# NEW YEAR | NEW ENCOUNTERS

## ENCOUNTER ONE : THE BATTLES I NEED TO LOSE

Pray, and then read **Genesis 32:22-30**

In this message, Pastor Jon spoke about Jacob and how his life was marked by a famous struggle: his all-night wrestling match with God. We all have something we're wrestling with in our lives, and for many of us, it's wrestling between who we've become and who we're supposed to be. As we try in our own strength to become who God created us to be, we wrestle with our past, with our secrets, and with God Himself. But just as Jacob's wrestling match ultimately ended, we can take heart in knowing that we do not have to struggle like this forever. God desires to help us become the person He made us to be. There are two keys to ending the struggle between who we are and who we're supposed to be.

**The first key is giving up being in control.** Pride keeps us stuck in the struggle as we grasp for control, but brokenness leads to breakthrough (Psalm 51:17). When we embrace humility and surrender control to God, He can lead us to places we could never go on our own (1 Peter 5:6).

**The second key is giving our whole life to God.** No more saying Jesus is our Lord but following our own plan. The late Presbyterian pastor, D. James Kennedy once said: "You cannot say, 'No, Lord,' and mean both words; one annuls the other. If you say no to Him, then He is not your Lord." If we want God's best for our lives, we'll go all in and follow His lead (Mark 8:34 MSG)! When we surrender control and give our entire lives to God, we will become the truest version of ourselves. As C.S. Lewis said, "I become my own only when I give myself to Another."

### Discussion Questions:

- Do you find yourself currently wrestling between who you are and who God created you to be?
- In what ways do you struggle (with your past, with your secrets, with God, etc.)?
- What one thing in your life, if you surrendered it to God, would make the biggest difference?
- If you are on your way to becoming who God made you to be, what was the key for you to experience breakthrough?

### Prayer Focus

*Father, thank You for creating us with great potential and purpose. Thank You for having a plan for our lives. Help us surrender our pride and give You control of our lives. We want to be all in with You. Lead us where You want us to go. We are Yours! Help us become all You created us to be.*

### Next Steps

We have just started 21 Days of Prayer. Over the next three weeks, take time daily to surrender your life again to God. Ask Him for help in your journey to fulfill your potential, and recommit to an all-in mindset. Come to as many prayer services as you can, and when you can't attend in person, join us online on Facebook at 7:00AM on Wednesday.

### Application Tip

Think about the steps you've taken to progress on your journey of becoming who God created you to be. Share practical steps that have been key for you.