



# CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

A FOUR-PART SERIES ON FOUR LIFE-CHANGING ENCOUNTERS WITH THE DIVINE

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## DISCUSSION GUIDE WEEK 1 (SEPTEMBER 7-13) JACOB: FIGHTING FOR A BLESSING

WELCOME.

WORSHIP.

**Sing:** *CHRIST BE MAGNIFIED* (Cody Carnes)

WORD.

**Introduction:** Last Sunday, Pastor Elijah kicked off this new series on the power of a genuine encounter with God with the story of Jacob. After years of struggling to find his luck and failing, Jacob decides to reconcile from his only brother whom he cheated. On his way to where his brother lived, he had an encounter with God that would change his life and trajectory forever.

**Scripture:** **GENESIS 32:1-32**

**Dig Deep into God's Word:**

1. What was the context of the story? Can someone in the group summarize Jacob's life up until that point?
2. What preparations did Jacob make in anticipation of his meeting Esau? (see Gen 32:9-13) What attitude does Jacob express in the words he gives his servant to speak to Esau? (Gen 32:18) Do you think this is significant?
3. What is the significance of Jacob seeing the Angels and what is his response to seeing them? Why do you think God allowed Jacob to see them at this time? Why was Jacob in such a state of anxiety?
4. Why did Jacob wrestle with God? Why did God consent to wrestle with Jacob? Why did Jacob's stubborn, manipulative character make a wrestling match necessary? What changed in Jacob's life because of this wrestling match with God? (Why do you think God gave Jacob a limp?)
5. How did Jacob's wrestling with God prepare him for meeting with Esau? What was the result of that highly anticipated, anxiety-inducing meeting between Jacob and Esau? To what do you ascribe this result?

WORK.

**Apply God's Word:**

1. What was your biggest take-away from this past Sunday's sermon
2. Why do you think does God need to break us first before He blesses us?
3. Have you ever experienced God-wrought brokenness that changed your life?
4. God gave Jacob a new name, and Jacob renames the place of his encounter with God. What is the significance of this? What is equivalent of this in our own life in the New Covenant?
5. Are there areas in your own life that you are still struggling to obey God in? Can you name these areas?