

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

December 2, 2018

Family Lessons from Genesis

by Frank Himmel

Speaking of the Old Testament, Paul said, "For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction..." (Romans 15:4).

Among other things, there is much we can learn about family life from those who lived along ago. Consider a few family lessons from the book of Genesis. Some of these are taught by successes, others by failures.

- *It is possible to be a godly family in an ungodly environment.* Noah's family was (7:1). Compare what God said about Abraham (18:19).

- *Family relations must not take precedence over God's will.* Abraham had to learn that lesson, both with reference to Ishmael (17:18) and to Isaac (22:2).

- *Our families may be adversely affected by a worldly environment.* Lot's daughters are a prime example (19:12-38).

- *Parents' sins are easily repeated in subsequent generations.* Isaac (26:1-11) followed Abraham's lie (20:1-18), and

Jacob (30:31-43) followed Rebekah's deceitfulness (27:1-29).

- *Marital love and happiness can be learned.* Isaac married Rebekah the day he met her (24:67).

- *The husband/father needs to be a spiritual leader.* Isaac prayed for his family (25:21). Jacob called for repentance (35:2-3).

- *Children should be allowed to pursue their own interests/talents.* Jacob and Esau were as different as brothers could be (25:27).



- *Siblings need to care and share, not be self-centered.* Jacob and Esau were as inconsiderate of each other as could be (25:29-34).

- *As family members, our conduct affects others, even when we or they are older.* Esau's marriages, at age forty, brought grief to his parents (26:34-35). Jacob's ongoing family problems were part of his lifetime of unpleasantness (47:9).

- *Parental favoritism is always a problem.* Jacob illustrates that, both on the receiving (27:1-40) and giving (37:3-4) ends.

- *Parents must work as a team, not as opponents.* Isaac and Rebekah failed to do that (27:1-40). ▶

- *We honor parents in how we live, not just what we say to or about them.* Jacob spoke kindly to Isaac while lying to him (27:1-29)!

- *Parents may be self-deceived about their motives with reference to their children.* Laban was much more interested in Jacob’s service than in Leah’s honor (29:21-27).

- *One’s primary family responsibility is to his spouse; parents are secondary.* Rachel and Leah illustrate that in the dispute between Laban and Jacob (31:4-16).

- *Tattletales are despised by their siblings.* Joseph learned that the hard way (37:2). Of course, some things need to be reported.

- *One should be very careful about circumstances within his house which may lead to temptation.* A handsome servant and a lustful wife alone in Potiphar’s house proved disastrous (39:7-18).

- *Genuine changes of heart are possible, and forgiveness is essential.* There is no place for grudges. Joseph’s brothers mistreated him more than any family member likely will do to us, yet he forgave them (50:19-21). ■



Doing Without

I read this little tidbit several years ago.

A nurse was showing a patient to his hospital room. “Now,” she said, “we want you to be happy and enjoy yourself while you are here, so if there is anything you want that we haven’t got, let me know and I’ll show you how to get along without it.”

Is that not one of the great keys to happiness? There was a man in the Bible who had little money, no security, no real home, poor health, little leisure time, and few friends who had not deserted him. Yet Paul wrote in these circumstances:

Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need; I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:9-11).

If we have Christ, we just might amaze ourselves at what else we could do without. *FH*

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday	Wednesday
GREETER	Josh Baucom	Josh Baucom
SONG LEADER	Clifton Lefort	John Baucom
OPENING PRAYER	Mike Zachry	
LORD’S SUPPER		
BREAD	Albert Lee Harrison	
CUP	Adam Gibson	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Adam Wilson	
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Sam Walters
CLOSING PRAYER	J B Williams	Bruce Hollander