**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | Lessons from a Dysfunctional Family |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Hebrews 11:20; Genesis 25:24-34 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2395 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. Dysfunctional families are numerous.
      1. The family is meant to be the seminary of Heaven.
         1. But for many it has become the incubator of Hell.
      2. There is a war on the family and Satan strives to dismantle families.
   2. The family is an important social institution.
   3. The family is an active participant in the creation, maintenance and perpetuation of society.
   4. But some people believe that the family had no origin in God.
      1. The family is not the result of sociological causes.
      2. The family did not rise up from evolution.
      3. The family is not the product of sociology.
   5. The family is the first institution created by God.
      1. Created in Garden of Eden.
      2. Created to meet mankind’s deepest spiritual, psychological, emotional, and physical needs.
      3. Created before government, education, or the church.
   6. Only twice in history has civilization abandoned the institution of the family:
      1. The Greeks in 300 B.C.
      2. The Romans in 33 A.D.
      3. When the family left people’s minds and hearts, the culture also disintegrated.
   7. Isaac and his descendants demonstrate the raging war against family and home, but there is also hope.
      1. Hebrews 11:20 summarizes the drama in Isaac’s family.
      2. Genesis 25:24-34
         1. Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Esau had an amazingly dysfunctional family.
         2. God also granted this family amazing grace.
         3. Trouble began the moment twins Jacob and Esau were born.
            1. Isaac favored Esau.
            2. Rebekah favored Isaac.
         4. The twins were opposites physically and in temperament and skills.
            1. Esau’s instinct was to hunt and kill and he was a hairy man.
            2. Jacob’s instinct was to preserve and protect and he was a smooth-skinned man.
         5. Esau came in from the field and asked Jacob for some stew to which Jacob asked for the birthright in return.
            1. Hebrews 11:20
   8. What is the birthright?
      1. The birthright generally went to the oldest son.
         1. Esau was the older of the two.
      2. But God had said that the younger son, in this case, would receive the birthright.
         1. According to God, the birthright already belonged to Jacob.
      3. The birthright was the blessing of Abraham.
         1. God had promised Abraham he would be a blessing to all nations.
         2. The blessing would come through Abraham’s descendants.
            1. Isaac was the first descendant to receive the blessing.
            2. Then it passed to Jacob.
            3. Then to his oldest, Judah, on down until Messiah.
         3. The blessing involved protection, prominence, and prophecy.
2. the failure of a dysfunctional family
   1. At center stage are four incredibly unspiritual individuals forming this dysfunctional family’s core.
   2. Isaac, the sensual father.
      1. He is about to bless the wrong son for the wrong reason.
      2. Savory, meat and venison are repeated often in Genesis 27.
      3. Isaac was given over to his appetites and senses.
         1. His eyes are not on God.
         2. Isaac serves as a warning today for all fathers:
            1. They care not for the things of God.
            2. They have their own plan for their children.
            3. They have never sought the will of God for their children.
            4. They are controlled by appetites for alcohol, sports, business, pleasure, sex.
            5. They are bringing many kinds of damage to the family.
      4. Isaac, who had been a spiritual man, in his old age became a carnal man.
         1. He represents the flesh, the old sensual nature in each of us.
      5. If you live for the things of this world, one day those things you thought were important may not seem important.
         1. You may come to the place where you’d give all you own to have your children sober and your marriage resurrected.
   3. Rebekah, the scheming mother.
      1. Rebekah decides to contravene what Isaac desires.
      2. She is not submissive to her husband.
      3. She is outside the will of God because she is trying to do a right thing in the wrong way.
         1. Genesis 27:6-13
            1. She will prepare the meal to trick Isaac into believing Esau brought it.
      4. If the devil cannot keep you from doing a wrong thing, he will try to get you to do a right thing the wrong way.
      5. She tries to protect her favored son, but as a result, she loses her son.
         1. Esau will soon be trying to kill Jacob.
         2. Jacob will soon be driven from his parents’ home and sent far away.
         3. Rebekah will never see Jacob again in her lifetime.
         4. By scheming, Rebekah loses the very thing she wants to keep and protect.
      6. The best way mothers can keep a child is to trust that child to God.
   4. Jacob, theshady son.
      1. Jacob wanted the right thing; he had a heart for God.
      2. But he couldn’t trust God to bring it to pass.
      3. The blessing was already his, but by trying, rather than trusting, he entangles himself in shady deals.
         1. Many Christians today are scheming rather than trusting God.
      4. In Christ, we Christians have a birthright.
         1. Ephesians 1:3
         2. The birthright is already ours.
         3. We fight a battle already lost, rather than enjoying a victory already won.
         4. God has given us victory in the Lord Jesus Christ.
         5. Jacob deceives his elderly father.
         6. Jacob schemes, rather than putting everything into the hands of God.
         7. Yet we scheme and try when we should be trusting God.
   5. Esau, the sorry brother.
      1. Genesis 27:30-38
         1. The name Jacob means “deceiver,” “supplanter,” “conniver.”
      2. Esau lived for the things of this world.
      3. He didn’t care about the treasured birthright.
      4. Jacob had a heart for spiritual things; he wanted the birthright.
      5. Esau despised the birthright.
      6. Esau is not weeping because he lost the birthright.
         1. He weeps because he lost the influence, possessions and power which accompany the birthright.
         2. Esau’s sorrow is remorse, not true repentance.
   6. What a dysfunctional family, yet God was at work in this family.
      1. Yet God did something for this family.
      2. God can do something for you and your family.
3. the faith of a disciplined father
   1. If the family is wrong, most likely the father is wrong.
   2. Isaac realizes he has been wrong.
      1. He allowed himself to be deceived.
      2. His senses of touch, taste and smell deceived him.
      3. He has blessed Jacob when he intended, wrongly, to bless Esau.
      4. Isaac “trembles exceedingly.”
         1. Genesis 27:33
            1. He is shaken to the core.
         2. God has shown him now what a fool he has been.
         3. Isaac is under heavy conviction because God has chastised him.
      5. Isaac now realizes how carnally, willfully, deliberately he tried to override God’s will, and for his own selfish reasons bless the wrong son.
      6. God brings him to repentance and faith.
   3. Isaac in his heart really loved the Lord.
      1. Ultimately, he was a great man, one who typified Christ.
      2. When he was young, Isaac allowed his hands and feet to be bound and laid on an altar in obedience to Abraham.
         1. Genesis 22
      3. But in his old age, he has gotten away from God.
   4. Some of us used to love God with a flaming passion, but now we are old and carnal.
      1. Thinking about ourselves.
      2. Trying to have as much fun as we can.
      3. We’ve forgotten the things of God.
      4. We must go out with torch blazing and a burst at the finish, not old and carnal, away from God.
   5. Thank God, He brought Isaac back.
      1. Do not mistake the moment for the man.
         1. This sad episode, trying to bless the wrong son, was only one incident.
      2. Having been disciplined, he learns his senses deceived him.
      3. If you want to know the will of God, you must walk in the Spirit, or your senses will deceive you.
         1. Isaac was deceived by thinking he was about to die when he lived 40 more years.
         2. He thought goat meat was venison.
         3. He thought Jacob’s hands were Esau’s hands.
         4. His sense of smell deceived him.
      4. But God had not stopped working; “Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound.”
         1. Romans 5:20
   6. Thank God, He is the God of a second chance.
      1. God disciplined the father in this family.
      2. He may be ready to discipline you.
      3. God loves you too much to let you go on ruining your family.
      4. 1 Corinthians 11:31-32
      5. When we’re chastened, we’re chastened of the Lord, as He did Isaac.
4. the forecast of a determined future
   1. Isaac looked ahead to the future. “By faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, concerning things to come.”
      1. Hebrews 11:20
   2. Genesis 28:1-4
   3. God is never out of business.
      1. In spite of all Jacob and Esau could do, Jacob still received the blessing.
      2. In spite of all Isaac and Rebekah could do, Jacob still received the blessing.
   4. Man may rule, but God will overrule.
      1. The sovereignty of God will prevail.
         1. Proverbs 19:21
         2. Psalm 33:10
         3. The people mentioned in these verses chose to do wrong things.
         4. Likewise, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Esau had chosen to do wrong things.
         5. But over it all, God is sovereign, bringing about His will.
         6. God promised Abraham, “In you all nations of the world will be blessed.”
            1. Genesis 22:18
            2. What God has said, all Hell cannot annul.
      2. God gave the blessing to Abraham.
         1. Abraham gave the blessing to Isaac.
         2. Isaac is giving the blessing to Jacob.
         3. Jacob will give the blessing to his son Judah.
         4. Out of Judah comes the house of Jesse.
         5. Out of Jesse, king David will come.
         6. From the lineage of David comes both Mary and Joseph.
         7. From their lineage comes the Lord Jesus Christ.
      3. God is at work, and all Hell cannot stop it.
   5. God has set history moving toward one goal: He will crown the Lord Jesus, who will reign from shore to shore.
5. FIVE LESSONS FROM A DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY
   1. Dysfunctional families produce dysfunctional kids.
   2. A father’s priorities will determine the family’s function.
      1. If a family is wrong, most likely the father is wrong.
      2. When, from the beginning, the husband loves and serves God, most often the wife and children will follow along.
   3. Parents have great power to bless or to curse.
      1. You have incredible power to bless your children.
      2. Do not let a day go by without blessing your children in prayer.
      3. There is power in speaking a blessing over your children.
   4. We cannot choose for our children.
      1. We wish we could but we cannot.
      2. God has given our children a will.
      3. Sometimes parents take credit for good children when they shouldn’t.
      4. Sometimes parents take the blame for bad children when they shouldn’t.
      5. People have questions about this verse, “*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it*.”
         1. Proverbs 22:6
         2. This is a proverb, not a promise.
      6. If you take a proverb and try to turn it into a promise, you’ll lose your faith.
         1. A proverb is a principle, which, if generally applied, brings a general result.
         2. If a child goes wrong, parents mistakenly ask, “What did I do?”
            1. Jacob and Esau turned out as different as night and day,
            2. Cain and Abel, same parents, but one turned out to be a murderer.
            3. God Himself had two children, Adam and Eve, in the Garden of Eden. The problem wasn’t the environment or their Father.
         3. God gave your child a will; you can’t take credit if they serve God, or take the blame if they don’t.
         4. There comes a time when you must understand God allows children to have a will of their own.
            1. If God hadn’t given our children a will, we could not have fellowship with them.
         5. God did not make us robots but people with a will.
         6. We must love our children, pray for our children, and thank God when they turn out well.
   5. Man’s failure cannot nullify God’s sovereignty.
      1. Hebrews 11:20
      2. What are those things to come?
         1. Jesus is going to reign here on this earth.
         2. Isaac prophesied of the coming Messiah.
         3. Isaac prophesied the godly line to come.
         4. Isaac prophesied about the birthright.
6. conCLUSION
   1. We are divided from God by a chasm of sin.
   2. The Lord Jesus Christ hung on a cross to bring together our sin-sick souls in fellowship with the Father.
   3. On His cross Jesus reconciled God and man.
   4. Are you willing by faith to receive by faith what Isaac saw by faith?
   5. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   6. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16