



Father's Day Sermon 2009

Genesis 25:27-34 and 27:1-33

IDENTITY THEFT

I'd like you to have a look at these pictures. PICTURES These men all have something in common with me. Would anybody like to guess what it is? The only clue on this Fathers' Day is that it isn't that they are dads. Any ideas? To help you on your way, let me play you a little clip from this guy (MARK REID – The Inn way). There it is. Did you get it? If you're hearing wasn't that good, let me give you a clip from this guy (MARK REID – British Film Institute) You've got it I think. They are all called Mark Reid. Yes, they are all me – or not as the case may be. How confusing it would be if we all ended up in the same room together! We wouldn't know who was who! I could easily pretend to be someone else!

IDENTITY THEFT

If you want a good example of family life, then today's story isn't it. If you want to know how to be a lousy father, a lousy mother, or just lousy parents, then Isaac and Rebekah are good role models. It all started when Rebekah had twins. They were non identical twins. The first out was a strapping lad – but he was all hairy – so they decided to call him Hairy – see what I mean about bad parents. Would you like to go around for the rest of your life being called Hairy?

The remarkable thing about these twins when they were born is that when Hairy came out, they found his younger brother holding on to one of his heels. How weird – so they called him Grasper THE STORY OF HAIRY AND GRASPER. If you thought Hairy was bad, then Grasper is even worse. Actually, we know them by the Hebrew words for Hairy and Grasper – Esau and Jacob.

Their biggest mistake is clear in the passage – they showed favouritism to one child over another. Esau was daddy's boy and Jacob was mummy's boy. The boys lived up to their names. Esau was the wild man – the macho male – who liked to go out to hunt and kill things, whilst Jacob was a home-bird who stuck with mum. Jacob, being second out as it were wasn't entitled to the advantages of being older son. JACCOB, ESAU AND THE BOWL OF SOUP So Grasper by name and grasper by nature, conned Esau out of it one day by getting him to exchange it for a BOWL OF RED LENTIL SOUP. Who was worse, Jacob toe con-man, or Esau the silly man who thought so little of inheriting the benefits of his fathers wealth and title, that he would swap it for a bowl of soup. After all if he'd wanted the soup, Hairy, the wild man of the family could have just pushed Jacob aside and helped himself.

THE STOLEN BLESSING The worse thing was the way in which Jacob and his mum, took advantage of their almost blind and totally infirm father to con Esau out of his father's blessing. Isaac wanted to make sure Esau at least got that, having given his birthright away to his crafty, grasping brother. You heard the story. Jacob got the blessing by pretending to be his brother, with his mother's collusion. Esau gets home to find his brother has conned him – and dad.

What a rum situation? HOW DID THEY SORT IT OUT? Well of course, if they had lived today, they could have gone on the JEREMY KYLE Show. That would have been interesting. There would be Esau, the hairy aggrieved brother complaining how bad Jacob was. Jacob would come on flanked by guards to stop Esau killing him – sneering away. And of course, mum Rebekah would be screaming at Jeremy for accusing her of being a bad mother.

But they didn't have the Jeremy Kyle Show then. Esau was furious and consoled himself with the thought of killing Jacob – which of course would get him his birthright back at least. Jacob did what all good con-men do – when found out - he legged it. MAN RUNNING Did that make Jacob realise he shouldn't con people? Of course not, like dodgy loan sharks, double glazing salesmen and the rest, he went somewhere else and eventually did some more conning there until he got found out again!

WAS JACOB BEYOND REDEMPTION?

Surely people as bad as Jacob – the man who cheated his brother and took advantage of an elderly and almost disabled man deserve our scorn? The interesting thing is that he had an encounter with God who changed his life and he found reconciliation with Esau too. FOUND REDEMPTION AND RECONCILIATION.

When it comes to God, there's no-one so far from Him that they can never find their way to Him. In fact, He even seeks out those who constantly run away like Jacob. Is that you this morning – running every time God challenges you? God comes after you. Not to get you, but to offer reconciliation with Him.

You see God did something about us through His Son. His Son Jesus wasn't like shifty old Grasper; He was prepared to die for each one of us so that we can be reconciled to God.

IN JESUS GOD OFFERS US REDEMPTION AND RECONCILIATION

Here's the score, today Jesus wants you to accept the forgiveness that God offers, the forgiveness that Jesus bought on the cross – and He wants to know you as His child – not just for now, but for eternity. That's the message that myself, Simon, and the church fellowship here want to bring to you this morning. Here's a bit of the Bible.

Corinthians 5:20-21 (New Living Translation)

20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

There you go, that's our message: that's what Jesus did. He wants things to be right between you and Him. He's done His bit.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

Prayer.

*Preached by Mark Reid
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