



## SESSION 5

### **The Dysfunctional, Remarkable Family**

God works through family drama to accomplish His plan.

## WATCH

### **Week 5 Video | The Dysfunctional, Remarkable Family**

[Session Video](#) (10 minutes)

What are your main takeaways from the video? (10 minutes)

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## READ THESE SCRIPTURE PASSAGES ALOUD:

### **Genesis 25:21-28 NIV**

<sup>21</sup> Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. <sup>22</sup> The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. <sup>23</sup> The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger." <sup>24</sup> When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. <sup>25</sup> The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau. <sup>26</sup> After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them. <sup>27</sup> The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents. <sup>28</sup> Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

### **Genesis 27:41 NIV**

<sup>4</sup>Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

### **Genesis 33:1-5 NIV**

<sup>1</sup>Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants. <sup>2</sup>He put the female servants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear. <sup>3</sup>He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother. <sup>4</sup>But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept. <sup>5</sup>Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. “Who are these with you?” he asked. Jacob answered, “They are the children God has graciously given your servant.”

### **Psalms 133:1 NIV**

<sup>1</sup>How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!

### **Matthew 5:9 NIV**

<sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

## **DISCUSSION**

Manipulating people and circumstances leads to dysfunction and broken relationships, while surrender to God brings abundant life.

## **Head**

*(15–20 minutes)*

1. Esau’s and Jacob’s temperaments drove their division. “Heads I win. Tails you lose.” How can deceptions eventually cause hurt feelings and emotional distancing? How did parental favoritism contribute to the twins’ antagonism?
2. What was Jacob’s typical reaction when faced with opposition?
3. “If you weren’t brothers, you’d never be friends.” Can a family with confrontational personalities build harmony? How?

## **Heart**

*(15–20 minutes)*

1. Charlie Dates says we can win by “surrendering to God.” When has God appeared in your life and changed your character to be more aligned with His will?
2. Family drama has been around a very long time, and God still works through it. Can you relate in your own family?
3. How have you been able to encourage or instill an appreciation for different gifts and different challenges in your family?

# Hands

(10 minutes)

## Reaching Upwards: Growing in Your Relationship with God

1. What is your ultimate goal in your relationship with God?
2. What steps are you taking to obtain that relationship?
3. Journal your readings in the Bible that speak about surrendering to God with patience and trust. Be personal in your entries. After a month, reread your responses. Then journal what you notice about your growth.

## Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

1. Read Psalm 133:1 and Matthew 5:9 as you contemplate how to best connect with your neighbors.
2. Like siblings, neighbors can produce tension and strife. How could you build trust and harmony with even the most difficult neighbors? What connections can you make with them? Do they have children? Are they elderly? Their interests?
3. How does cultivating good relations with neighbors reflect living as kingdom people, bringing hope into our lives, communities, and the world as discussed in our last small group study, *Surprised by Hope* (N.T.Wright)?

### READING PLAN

To reinforce learnings in Session 5, read the following this week at your pace or according to this suggested plan:

**Day 1:** Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25:19–34; 27:1–28:9)

**Day 2:** Jacob in Exile (Genesis 28:10–29:30)

**Day 3:** Jacob's Family (Genesis 29:31–30:43)

**Day 4:** Jacob Returns Home (Genesis 31:1–33:20)

**Day 5:** Jacob Establishes Himself in Canaan (Genesis 34–36)