

99-10-24a

As we continue our worship this morning, our scripture reading comes from two passages and presents two sides of an issue that is central in our study as we continue this morning in Genesis chapter 30. For the first part, we will be in Romans chapter 8. For the second part, we'll be in Hebrews chapter 10. In Romans chapter 8, this verse is well known for, perhaps most centrally, Romans 8.28. It is a great comfort to us.

Almost any believer of any denominational or theological stripe recognizes and takes comfort in the principle found in Romans 8.28, all things work together for good. Unfortunately, a lot of times we consciously or unconsciously put conditions on that verse that are not in the scripture. Is there a condition on Romans 8.28 which says, of course, we know that all things work together for good.

There's a secular saying that parallels what might at first appear to be the thought of this verse, every cloud has a silver lining, and that even as a dark cloud comes overhead, it can... You know, there's another saying that says, it is an ill wind that doesn't bring some good with it. Most wind, even if it blows in some bad stuff, usually brings something good. A wind often precedes a rain storm, and so on.

So, is Romans 8.28 just in the same line with these truisms, or is there something more? As you look at the second half of that verse, we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose. We have studied this verse in its context and have referred to it in other studies, and we should be able to recall that love of God is not automatic. Love of God is not a part of salvation.

It is impossible to love someone that we do not know, and at the point of salvation, we do not know God. God knows us, God loves us, God loved the world, and while we were yet sinners, hopeless, helpless, and useless, as Paul says elsewhere, without hope and without God in the world, Christ came and died for us. God expressed his love toward us, but we, even at the point of salvation, we can recognize our need and recognize the grace of God, seize and lay hold of it, but we do not lay hold of it by love, we lay hold of it by faith.

At the moment of our salvation, we are not suddenly injected with a love for God. This is something that develops over time in the same way that when we meet someone in the human realm, as we get to know them and come to appreciate various qualities and attributes that they possess, we develop love. So, when it says, to those who love God, there is some process involved.

We can just deduce this by looking at the facts. Something has to bring us to the point of love for God, and that of course is coming to know God. We come to know God, we come to know God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ, because in Christ all the fullness

of deity dwells in bodily form.

Christ is the revealed member of the Trinity, and to grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the means by which we develop our love for God. When we enter into that process, and it is a process, and we may be at the beginning of it, in the middle of it, or somewhere further advanced, we qualify, we find ourselves in the category that is spoken of in this verse, those who love God. The second part, those who are the called according to his purpose, this on the surface would seem to include all believers, because all believers are called.

But as we know from other places in scripture, many are called, but few are chosen. And in this verse, in this context, as we have seen, those who are the called, it is comparable to what the Lord said about being sons of God, being children of God. All those who are saved, in any dispensation, are sons of God, or children of God.

But to be a son in the true sense, to reflect the Father's character, to be, as you might say in a slang way, a chip off the old block, to reflect the Father and to be a son in deed, is not universal. It requires growth, it requires transformation. And there are many of us who are sons on paper, who are sons when it comes to the accounting of salvation, who are not children of God when it comes to reflecting his character.

And in this verse, those who are the called, all believers are called, but which believers live in the light of that calling, reflect that calling in daily life, those who do so fall into this category. And the two go hand in hand, to love God and to be the called according to his purpose. These are results and effects that come about in our lives and in our souls when we ask and seek and knock, when we respond to the opportunity that God has placed before us because of where we stand in Christ.

So once again, Romans 8, 28, we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose. And when you go on down through Romans 8, 29 and 30 and see the process, the sequence of events by which God has made this possible, the foreknowledge, the pre-designating that God did in Christ to be conformed to the image of his Son, obviously if all believers are called and if these things are a foregone conclusion, then all believers are going to be conformed to the image of his Son. But that in this life does not take place.

Most of us are not conformed to the image of his Son. Most of us miss that because there is the factor of human choice, human priorities, human decisions. And God does not overrule us even though positionally we are in union with Christ and we are cleansed and we are sons and we share many things by our position in Christ.

Our experience and our outworking of these things depends on what we do with the opportunity. Sometimes you can cover these truths and express them and we as believers, when we hear them, we hold something in reserve in our minds and we say,

well, maybe this is all pretty much a part of the sovereignty of God and maybe this isn't talking about a subset of believers, maybe this is really talking about all believers and we would just like to think otherwise, but really all things do work together for good regardless of what you think or what you decide. There is a sense in which it does because God's plan is good and God's plan is fulfilled no matter what.

The worst believer that ever lived, the most awful reprobate, receives discipline and judgment from God, the sin unto death and so forth, and that's an ugly thing for that person, but it is a part of the plan of God. It manifests God's righteousness and justice, His character, His consistency, that no one slips through the cracks, there is no injustice in the plan of God, and that is good. But this passage is looking at it from the standpoint of the person, not from God.

We know that nothing happens outside the will of God and the plan of God and the purpose of God. Even the destruction of Satan and the fallen angels in the lake of fire is good. It's not happy and it isn't certainly something they would consider to be ideal, but when you talk about the ultimate good, everything, even the dealing with sin and failure in God's plan is good.

But this passage, Romans 8, is talking about the human perspective, the person involved. And for us as believers, if we love God, if we are living like the called, if we recognize and pursue our calling according to His purpose rather than our own, these things work together for our good. We perceive the good.

We experience the good. We benefit from the good. We're on the positive side of the ledger.

We're reflecting God's glory, not serving as an example of God's justice. And this is borne out when you look at verse 29 and 30. Whom He foreknew, He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He, the Son, might be the firstborn among many brethren.

And whom He predestinated, these He also called. Whom He called, these He justified, and whom He justified, these He also glorified. In the positional sense, all of these things are true, but Romans is talking about experience, the message of the book is seize and lay hold of God's righteousness by faith as a believer.

That's what Romans is all about. And Paul goes on in verse 31, What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Well, who is God for? In the broad sense, being our Heavenly Father, He is for all of us. But who is God for in the experiential sense, on the blessing side of the ledger? Those who love Him, those who pursue the calling according to His purpose.

Just as Jesus spoke to the disciples in the upper room. If you have the man who has my

words and keeps them, He is the one who loves me. And I and my Father will come to Him and make our home with Him.

That's the good. That's the goal. And not all of us, in fact very relatively few of us as believers are moving in that direction.

So, what is it that holds us up? Well, the second part of our scripture reading this morning is over in Hebrews chapter 10. Having spent a good deal of time, especially between chapter 6 and chapter 10, talking about the priesthood of Jesus Christ and the higher, greater ministry He has as a high priest, according to the order of Melchizedek and the work that He has accomplished on our behalf. The author of Hebrews in chapter 10 verse 19 says, Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

He's reviewed the priestly ministry of Jesus Christ and he says, Because of this, we can boldly enter the holiest place. And this is such a contrast to the age of Israel where once a year on the day of atonement, the high priest alone would disappear behind the veil into the holiest, into the place of the presence of God. We sang this morning the doxology and the third verse from that, talks about, from Psalm 100, the fact that we enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.

And this was a reference to the place where all believers could come. You could enter the tabernacle courts and later the temple courts and enter through the outside gates into the place where the sacrifices were offered and the monetary gifts were given and so forth. But to go into the holy place was reserved for the priests alone.

And to go into the holiest, the holy of holies, was reserved for the high priest alone in the Levitical system. But here, this is a startling thing. And remember this book was addressed primarily to Israelites, to Jewish believers.

That's why it's called the Hebrews, to the Hebrews. And this would be quite a striking statement to make. Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the holiest, any one of us can walk into the holy of holies, into the personal presence of God the Father.

How? By means of the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way which He consecrated for us through the veil. That is His flesh.

And in the same way that the veil was torn, making a way into the holiest, the holy of holies, the body of Christ was broken for us. And in that tearing, in that breaking, a way, a new and living way, has been made into the presence of God. John 14.6 I am the way, the truth and the life.

No man cometh unto the Father but by me. And this is that new and living way. Having a high priest over the house of God, who is Jesus Christ Himself, who partakes of our flesh, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

Our hearts having been sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies having been washed with pure water. We can be sanctified, we can be cleansed and walk right into the holy of holies. Walk right up to what would have been in the Old Testament days the Ark of the Covenant with the two cherubim with their wings outstretched and the mercy seat with the blood sprinkled upon it.

We can walk right up to the throne of God. And He says, let us do so. It ought to make a difference to us remembering that Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father.

That He has created this new and living way. That He makes intercession on our behalf. God the Holy Spirit translates and enhances our prayers with groanings that cannot be uttered.

Which Paul has mentioned back in Romans chapter 8 as well, in the earlier part of the chapter. And this ought to motivate us. And so we have these exhortations.

Let us draw near in verse 22. Verse 23, let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. For he who promised is faithful.

Verse 24, let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as is the manner of some but exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the day approaching. So this positional truth of Jesus Christ and our standing in Him and what He has done for us ought to motivate us to fulfill these exhortations.

Now let me ask you this. Why would we hesitate? Why would we not be interested in availing ourselves of this wonderful privilege that has not existed in any previous age? There was always a priesthood in previous ages. There was the family priesthood headed by the patriarch of the family.

Usually the senior or eldest living male in the tribe or in the clan or in the family was like Job, the one who offered the sacrifices, like Abraham. Then in the Levitical system, the Levites represented Israel before God. But we are our own priest.

We are a kingdom of priests, something that Israel will not experience until the millennium when they too will be a kingdom of priests. But what would slow us down? Well, if we have any understanding and if we have any inkling of what's going on and anything other than an apathetic indifference, we know our shortcomings and we know our failures and we know that we don't qualify on our own. And we tend to get our eyes on ourselves, on our failures, our sins, our shortcomings.

And in a way, this is a sort of self-centeredness. It's a sort of arrogance. Do you want to look at yourself or do you want to look at Christ? Christ knows these problems.

Christ came to solve these problems and has done so. And he is seated now at the right

hand of the Father because his power and his work on the cross is greater than our power and our sins and our failures. The choice we have to make is are we going to dwell on what we do or are we going to dwell on what Christ has done? Are we going to identify ourselves and view ourselves as the sinners and the failures that we know ourselves to be or are we going to view ourselves as the redeemed, as the sanctified, as the qualified because of Christ? Which are we more impressed with, our work or Christ's work? And we have to get over and we sometimes think, well, this is just my humility, this is my recognition that I'm such a worm as I, as it says in the old hymn at the cross.

Would he devote that sacred head for such a worm as I? Well, you can either look at the sacred head, now wounded, or you can look at the worm. And sometimes we get caught up in the worm and that's what we look at, that's what we dwell on, that's what we allow to fill our thoughts. And to do that is to obscure from view the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you want to dwell on the problem or dwell on the solution? The author of Hebrews exhorts us, have boldness, walk right into the throne room, walk right up to God the Father and make your requests known because you have been washed, you have been sanctified, you have been justified by something far greater than anything you can produce, whether it's a success or a failure. It's the work of Jesus Christ. That's what the author of Hebrews spends the first nine and a half chapters talking about, is the Lord Jesus Christ.

He begins the book. God spoke in many different ways in times past, but in these latter days he's spoken by a son. And look at the son.

Look at how great he is. His work on the cross supersedes the entire Levitical system and all of those generations of priests and all the hundreds of thousands of animals that were sacrificed in Israel were just a pale shadow and a prediction, a foreshadowing of what would come in Jesus Christ. And his work is so great.

How can you let something obscure it? How can you let something stand in the way of that? So he says, Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the holiest by a new and living way, which he consecrated for us through the veil, having a high priest over the house of God. Notice he says, Keep these things in view. This is what you ought to be looking at.

There's a high priest. The veil has been torn. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

This takes faith. We have to trust in the sufficiency of Christ's work. That when God looks at us, he doesn't see the leprous, diseased, fallen, failing, weak, hopeless person that we know ourselves to be.

What does he see? He sees a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. What is that heart

sprinkled with? It's the blood of Jesus Christ. Without the shedding of blood is no remission.

Without the sprinkling of blood, nothing in the old Levitical system was sanctified. But when it was sprinkled with the blood of a bull, or the blood of a sacrifice, it was cleansed. It was declared clean.

How much greater is the sprinkling of the blood of Christ in the eyes of God the Father? Why can we come and approach right after we've just authored a dismal failure and failed yet again in some well-known area of sin for us? Because our hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Water is so often in Scripture the picture of the Word of God itself, the tree that's planted by the river of water, the washing of water and renewing of the Holy Spirit. The way the Holy Spirit operates in our souls is through the Word.

It is our constant return to the Word, not only in Bible class but in meditation and bringing it up into our thinking and reviewing the things that we've learned and meditating on Scripture, going through whatever portion interests us at the time. That's the washing of water. Let the Word of God dwell in you richly, Paul says.

It doesn't just dwell in there in a stale fashion. It doesn't dwell in there like an unopened book on a shelf. If it dwells in us richly, this is the washing.

This is what cleanses our thoughts. We can get our minds off of ourselves. It's an easy thing to say, well, get your mind off yourself and look at Christ.

But mechanically, how do we do that? It says looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. But we can't see Him. How do we fix our eyes on Jesus? It's through the Word.

We get our mind off of ourselves, get our mind off of our failure and think about the Word of God that we have learned. Get into the Word, read the Scriptures, look at Jesus Christ. Just open a gospel and read about His compassion and His patience with us.

Open up to passages like Romans or Hebrews or pretty much any place and let the Word of God dwell in us richly. This is the washing of water. This is what renews our conscience.

This is what cleanses us, gives us objectivity and balance. And we can once again see the high priest seated at the right hand of the Father. I suppose I'm bending it a little bit to say this is our Scripture reading, but this is our New Testament Scripture thought that is so much in harmony with our study in Genesis chapter 30 where we will now turn and continue our study of the life of Jacob.

You will recall that Jacob is no prize at this point. You know the events that have led up

to where we now find him in the household of Laban. He begins to learn the sometimes painful lessons that he needs to learn away from his father's household, away from the influence of his mother, Rebekah.

And the areas of weakness in his soul that he has demonstrated in his dealings with his brother Esau, in his deception of his father Isaac. God is now at work in Jacob to teach him to shore up in his soul the weak areas, the areas where he typically fails. He is prone to deceit.

He is prone to finding the easy way. He is prone to gaining things by manipulation rather than by work. In the New Testament it says, he that does not work does not eat.

That was the rule in the church. Jacob, and he can rationalize and justify this in his own mind, but he has beat his brother out of the birthright and he has deceived his father into giving him the blessing. Yet he has no benefit from any of these things because God needs to teach him something.

It needs to teach him in a place of isolation, away from his family, away from the place where he grew up. So he has gone up to Paddan Aram, to the household of Laban. And we saw in chapter 29 that he falls in love almost immediately.

God has appeared to him and told him that he would bless him and be with him. And this is a good thing, but it can also be a painful thing because God is going to go to work on the areas in Jacob's soul that need work. And even as he is blessed in immediately meeting the woman of his dreams at the well, when he gets into the household of Laban, he is going to find himself on the other end of deceit.

He is going to get as good as he has given, if you will. So we saw in the marriage story that Laban, in verse 23 of chapter 29, took Leah, his daughter, and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. Laban gave Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid, and it came to pass in the morning, Behold! Leah! That's all it says in the Hebrew.

It's just, Jacob wakes up and rubs the sleepies out of his eyes and looks over and, Behold! Leah! Quite a shock. And he said to Laban, and of course you don't get the intervening hasty dressing and running through the camp to the tent. It just jumps immediately.

He apparently wasted little time looking up his new father-in-law and saying, What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me? Well, the sandal is on the other foot, isn't it? Laban said, It must not be done so in our country to give the younger before the firstborn. And these very same terms, younger and firstborn, have been applied to Jacob and to Esau. He says, Fulfill her week, the week-long celebration.

We will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another

seven years. It's interesting that he says this one. He doesn't say Rachel.

Apparently Rachel is there. And Laban just points over to her. Did Jacob go to her first? Was she sitting in her father's living room, so to speak, waiting, knowing that Jacob would arrive? It's just interesting that he says this one.

She's apparently in the room when this confrontation takes place. The service which you will serve me still another seven years. Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week.

That's Leah's week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. Of course, it doesn't say that the next seven years seemed like only a few days to him the way the first did.

Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as maid. We're going to see quite a bit about Bilhah and Zilpah this morning. Then Jacob also went into Rachel and he loved Rachel rather than Leah.

It doesn't really say more than, it's rather than. And he served with Laban still another seven years. Verse 31.

When the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. And this is God's favoring of not the obvious choice. Here it would seem that God led Jacob to the well and he meets Rachel and everything's great.

But now Rachel is barren. And the consummation of Jacob's hopes is to have a child with Rachel. But it doesn't happen.

God doesn't permit that. Why? We often think in our lives we have a hope. We have a desire for something.

And it seems like a worthy desire. It seems in line with the plan and purpose of God. God told Jacob, I will bless you and multiply you.

You've got the blessing that belonged to your grandfather and your father. Through you all the nations of the earth are going to be blessed. You're going to have descendants like the stars and the sand.

And all the things that were promised to Abraham and Isaac are going to be yours. So he serves for seven years and within the space of a week he winds up with two wives. But he finally fights his way through and here he is married to Rachel.

And that's what he's been after for the last seven years and seven days. But as the weeks and months pass and he spends all of his time with Rachel, you can imagine after the wedding night probably Leah gets relegated to a back seat because Jacob was really after Rachel. Now he's got her.

So he's going to spend his time. He says, well, let's get the children on the way here. So he's going to be spending a lot more time in the boudoir of Rachel than he is of Leah.

But nothing happens. And apparently, just occasionally, because it's his duty, he goes back and sees the unloved wife, Leah. And this would be very infrequent and by anybody's estimation, the law of averages, you would expect that if he's spending 14 or 15 nights with Rachel and one with Leah, that Rachel is going to be the one to conceive.

But instead, God, who controls the opening and closing of wombs, opens Leah's and closes Rachel's. Leah conceived and bore a son and called his name Reuben. We saw last time, the Lord has surely looked on my affliction.

Now, therefore, my husband will love me. This is obviously a problem. It is apparently quite perceptible to anybody in the camp that Jacob doesn't seem to give her the time of day.

He didn't serve seven years for her. He was stuck with her by deception. But think about this.

It doesn't matter how she arrived at being the wife. She is the wife, right? Isn't this the situation of Jacob? It doesn't matter how he arrived at the birthright and the blessing. It's his possession and it's his by right.

He received it. It was underhanded. It was sneaky.

It was a product of deception. But once you have it, it's yours. You see this later on with the Gibeonites and Joshua when they come into the land and God says, destroy all the people that are in the immediate vicinity.

You can make treaties with those that are outside the boundaries of the land and that are far away. So the Gibeonites pull a deception. Put on the old sandals and bring the moldy bread.

Oh, we've come from a far country. We want to make a treaty with you. Joshua, following God's instructions, makes a treaty with them.

Finds out very quickly that they are not who they appear to be. They're just over the hill. They're right in the vicinity.

They're supposed to be wiped out. But they now have a treaty. And it doesn't matter how they got it.

They have it. And God tells Joshua, you will honor that treaty. And it may not be the happiest of relationships, although they actually, their sort of cursing and being hewers of wood and haulers of water winds up being a blessing because they are closely associated with the worship of God in the tabernacle and later the temple worship.

And what better place to receive a saving knowledge of God and to be built up in the faith than to be a daily observer of all of the pictures of the work of Jesus Christ and to be that close to the presence of God. There were lots of people in Israel that didn't get as close to God as the Gibeonites, who are aliens and strangers. And this, in a way, is a foreshadowing of the fact that the Gentiles are going to get the chance to come closer to God than many of those in Israel.

But they're a wonderful picture. It doesn't matter how you get to where you are. Once you're there, that's what you work with.

And you see this principle throughout Scripture. God says, if you're a slave and you come to Christ, well, be a good slave. If you're a master, be a good master.

He doesn't say, go start trying to make a bunch of changes. And here, Jacob is finding out from the other side of the fence that this is something he needs to learn. He wants to have the benefit of the birthright and the blessing, even though he got it by subterfuge.

Well, now he has a wife that he has received through subterfuge. But she is still the wife. And Jacob is not willing to give her the place of a wife and the dutiful affection that she deserves as his wife.

And so this is why God does what he does, children-wise. Leah is going to have four sons as an unanswered challenge in the camp. So she has Reuben, she has Simeon, she has Levi, and she has Judah.

Now in chapter 30, when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister. Now, we have seen other cases in Scripture where one wife or one person is bearing children and the other is not. You get down to the first chapter of 1 Samuel, and you have Hannah.

Her husband has another wife, and that other wife is bearing children, and Hannah is not. But it doesn't say that Hannah envied the other wife, does it? There could be a lot of things going on, and this is always going to create tension. The Bible does not condone polygamy.

But it will treat it as the status quo. And God doesn't say, well, Jacob, you've got two wives. You shouldn't have gone after Rachel.

You should have just stuck with Leah, so Rachel's going to die or something. Keep in mind what we had in the opening portion of our lesson this morning. God works all things together for good.

And that all things includes ugly things. It includes failures. It includes sins.

It includes disobedience. God is such a great God. There is nothing that he cannot work

together for good.

We tend to think, well, if something had a bad start, if something got off on the wrong foot or originated out of a sin or a failure, well, that's going to be a despised thing. It's something that will never be a part of God's plan. It can't have any happy outcome.

Not so. It all depends on the last half of Romans 8.28. Do you love God? Are you pursuing his calling? It doesn't mean we're not going to make mistakes. It doesn't mean that we're not going to fail.

But we tend to look on the outward appearance. We tend to look on the superficial results of things. We see circumstances that are a result of sin or failure.

And we think, well, no good is going to come of that. God can make good come from anything. It depends on what's going on in our heart.

Do we love God? Are we the called according to his purpose? If we recognize that, God will never leave us. God will never forsake us. Just as he promised Jacob, I will be with you and I will bring you into the land.

You may be out of the land and you may make a lot of mistakes. But God says, I will never leave you until I have brought you back to the land and fulfilled for you all of the promises that I have made to your grandfather, to your father, and to you this night. That's what he tells Jacob.

And that's the principle that applies to us. What are we going to get our eyes on? Our failures? The consequences of our failures? Or are we going to look at the incredible, patient, compassionate grace of God? He never gives up. He never fails.

He just keeps on going. And he can do the most miraculous things in our lives if we just operate in faith. If we keep coming back to the source and don't get swamped or discouraged or deflected and distracted by our failures or the results of our failures.

So, Rachel, she's the pretty one. She's the desirable one. But look at what's in her soul.

It's envy. This is a mental attitude sin. What does she do when she sees her sister cranking out? This would be four years into the process now.

This will be the eleventh year of the sojourn. What does she do? She says to Jacob, Give me children or else I die. She doesn't go to the Lord.

She doesn't pray like Hannah. She goes to Jacob like it's all his fault. And what does this do? This creates anger in Jacob.

And Jacob, his anger is aroused against Rachel and he says, Am I in the place of God who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb? He's basically saying, Look, it's God that

does this. Well, this ought to be the little fist pounding on the side of the cranium here. What do you think is going on? What are you supposed to be learning here? So she comes up with the tired old ploy that Grandma Sarah came up with.

Well, try out the mane. Maybe you'll have better luck with her. Jacob has already said this is an issue that God controls.

Does she say, Well, let's go to God then. No, she says, Let's circumvent God. If God's closing my womb, Well, let's get some other lady in here that she can have a child.

So we're still in a learning process here, aren't we? We haven't reached the point of faith in God, confidence in God, trusting in God's provision, in God's timing, in God's justice, in God's purpose and plan. This is all about trying to find a human way to solve the problem. It's done in frustration.

It's done in anger. It's done out of envy. She's jealous of her sister.

Her sister is a woman of standing because she's produced not just four children, but four sons. How much better can it get? So what's God going to do? Is he going to throw up his hands and destroy them all? Is he going to say, I'll go back to Esau and see if there's more potential over on that branch of the family? God is going to work. He's patient.

This is a process that's going to take years, but God never gives up. He's going to work in circumstances. He's going to teach Jacob the things that Jacob needs to know to be the father of the nation that will be honored with the presence of God and that will be a light to the Gentiles, that will be the source of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's going to come from Jacob. This is a pretty dismal picture here, but it doesn't stop God. We are going to stop at this point and take our break.

When we come back, we'll resume in Genesis chapter 30.