

Once upon a time, a man wrestled with God. He was full of fear. In fact, he was literally afraid for his life. Things were not going according to plan. Now, add ANGER to his vigorous emotional palette. His whole life had been one of cleverly manipulating people and circumstances to come out on top. Hey, he'd worked hard for the life he had: family, wealth, purpose. Now, it was all about to explode. He was about to lose everything and he was mad.



He thought he was wrestling, at first, with just a mysterious, faceless stranger. Then it became more like an angelic being. Then it became more like God Himself. Weird. The wrestling match went all night. All night! Finally, as dawn was breaking, just as the man thought he was about to gain the upper hand, the strange being kned him hard in the sensitive man-parts. Owwww! The fight was over.

But the story gets even more bizarre when the Stranger gives him a “Well done!”. Then two surprising things happen: the Stranger shares an amazing future of influence for the man, a future that would literally change the destiny of every man, woman, and child from that day forward. Secondly, the man is given a new name by the Stranger: Jacob. He is know to us today as the scheming son of Isaac, son of Abraham.

Like Jacob in the Bible, I too find myself wrestling with God. Yep. I want my world ordered in the way I see fit, succumbing to the same manipulative creativity Jacob mastered so well. When life gets topsy-turvy and out of (my) control, my emotions begin to mirror Jacob’s frustration and anger. Then, Jesus and I get into a rather interesting wrestling match. I figure it’s interesting in a couple of ways:

1. I actually do trust Jesus and want him to “win” in a sense. I know that He’s got a perspective that is far wiser and more loving than my view of things.
2. I trust Jesus to give me “space” to work out my own resistance to reality, oftentimes that means some friendly sparring. Even when my faith is a bit on the thin side, Jesus has faith in me to live into a larger story, when I am ready.

Lots of folks feel that wrestling with God is off-limits. After all, He’s God and holy and all that. But the Bible is a love letter that continually invites us to get intimately “down and dirty” with the One Who Loves Us. True spirituality makes ample room for tough questions, doubts, and our own wild emotions. My heart breaks when Religion puts duct tape over the mouths of those who would seek a deeper explanation. Honest inquiry is one of the hallmarks of living life fully (why do you thing Jesus was always asking questions?). And when you get right down to it, truth often comes to us as the masked Stranger.

Are we ready for such an embrace?

Wrestling, as always,

Scott

P.S. Got a God-wrestling story that left you a changed human? I love to hear it! Feel free to stop by Lighthouse Church, Tuesday or Thursday between 9:30 - 1, for a chat & coffee. Or just email me at lighthousechurch906@gmail.com .