

Sermon Notes: The Great Transformation

1. Jacob had cheated his brother Esau out of their father's blessing. Esau vows revenge! (Jacob and Esau were the sons of Isaac, and Isaac was the son of Abraham.)
2. Shortly before he meets Esau, Jacob, left alone, meets an adversary; they wrestle until Jacob prevails. Jacob is renamed and transformed.
3. The story of personal transformation where one confronts and overcomes one's altar ego or SHADOW is a recurring one in great world literature as well as modern film. Luke Skywalker of the Star Wars trilogy is another example.
4. The story of Jacob, however, is not just about his transformation. It's about _____'s transformation! After all, could Jacob have been transformed if _____ had not become vulnerable?
5. The gospel or good news is that God doesn't keep us at a distance or stand back when we go through our struggles; instead, He comes down and meets us in history. In the story of Jacob, He becomes vulnerable. On the cross He does likewise. This is God's transformation!
6. Regarding the cross, Jacqueline Bussie of Concordia College writes: "Contrary to expectation, the God of the cross is weak, alone, afraid, misunderstood and dying . . . in our own stories, we forget the ways in which God accompanies us during the times when we feel the exact same way."
7. God **becomes** vulnerable. He transforms. Now he walks with us in our suffering; may His transformation be our transformation. May His coming down raise us up. Amen.