

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Standing Stones

Week 1: Encounter

Genesis 28:10-22

Week of June 6, 2021

(Jeff Griffin, Senior Pastor)

Every experience in life is precious, but certain moments are more significant — they change us forever. As we begin our new series, *Standing Stones*, let's examine how we can get the most out of life's defining moments.

Kicking it off: Thinking back on your life, what's one place in the world where you would place a special marker for something significant, either emotionally or spiritually? What happened there?

Discussion:

1. Read Genesis 28:13. What role did Abraham's family play in Jacob's spiritual heritage? How has your own family of origin influenced your spiritual journey (or lack of it)?
"There above it stood the LORD, and he said: 'I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.'"
2. Now take a look at Galatians 3:6-7. How are we connected to God's story with Jacob-turned-Israel?
"In the same way, 'Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith.' The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God."
3. In his message, Jeff outlined 4 ways where God is present and active in our lives. Which one encourages you the most? Which one feels kind of intimidating? And why?
 - God will PROVIDE for you.
 - God will USE you.
 - God will PROTECT you.
 - God will LEAD you.
4. In Genesis 28:17, Jacob describes sensing God's presence after dreaming about Heaven. Have you ever had a dream about God, angels, or Heaven? If you're comfortable, share it with the group.
"He was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.'"
5. In Genesis 28:18, Jacob sets up a stone as a memorial pillar. This was early in Jacob's life, before he married and had 12 kids (the future tribes of Israel). When was your earliest true encounter with God?
"Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it."
6. Read Psalm 27:4. How can we become more aware of (and find) God's presence, and how does an awareness of God's presence impact our worship time, both at home and at church? What do you think keeps us from encountering God's presence in our lives on a more regular basis?
*"One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple."*

Wrapping It Up: Pray for each member in your group to begin to experience more of God's presence.

Optional activity: Get some small stones, and write down significant encounters with God to mark what He has done for you.