



SEPTEMBER'S THEME

WHAT HAPPENS HERE

SCRIPTURE Genesis 32:22-32

BOTTOM LINE When we wrestle with scripture, it brings shalom (peace) to chaos

MEMORY VERSES Genesis 32:28

LIFE APP Don't be afraid to wrestle with scripture



• Tonight it would be great for you to get your kids to use a Bible or Bible app on their phone. Try "You Version," a Bible app that we use on the StuMin team.

• Be sure to write down questions about the Bible that you might have or that your kids might have so that we can address them on the StuMin Facebook and Instagram.

MY GOAL FOR THE NIGHT:

**THINK
ABOUT THIS**

How does how you approach the Bible affect the way that you read it and apply it to your life? Tonight we are going to challenge some of the assumptions we have about the nature of the Bible. Many people approach scripture in a strong literalistic manner that glosses over the complexity of the text, reducing it to a rule book for memorizing. What if the Bible were less like a rule book, or brick wall, and more like a Rubik's cube or a wrestling match? In one way, the Bible is a place where God helps us bring order (shalom) to chaos, and in another way it is a way that we have a relationship with God. Finally, what if there was room in our interpretation of the Bible for it to be seen as a kaleidoscope? Something where with every turn and every angle there is a new image of God's wisdom and story to greet us?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever encountered people who have held to a literal interpretation of the Bible? Have you ever felt pressure from these people to hold a similar belief? Are there certain issues or passages that they have pointed out?
- One of the metaphors Russ used for this interpretation of the Bible was a "brick wall" where the truth and value of the Bible is built piece by piece. Is this how you view the Bible? Is this how most people view the Bible? What are the benefits and drawbacks of such a view?
- Read Genesis 32:22-32. What happens to Jacob when he wrestles with the man? Have you ever wrestled with the Bible? What for? Did it changed you like Jacob wrestling with God? Why or why not?
- How has the Bible been a source of "shalom" or "peace" in your life? What was the chaotic situation that you were in that caused you to apply the Bible in such a way?
- Do you think people normally use the Bible to bring peace? Why or why not?
- Do you think that the kaleidoscope metaphor for the Bible contributes to this dual capacity of the Bible to bring peace and/or unrest?
- Russ talked about the way that Jacob's experience brought him from being someone who trips people up to someone who "prevails with God." What do you think that means? What does it look like when God prevails?
- What is a verse or story that you think shows God prevailing that we should wrestle with?

EXTRAS

TOUGH QUESTIONS

What You Need: Bible

What You Do: Try some real wrestling. Have the students work out some of their tough questions that they have about their faith and what the Bible says. What have they heard in a sermon or in StuMin that they have questions about? Take some time to really dig deep on this one...allow open and honest conversation to happen.

Topic Ideas:

Slavery, marriage dowry, can't eat pork. Don't be afraid to not know the answers.

Goal: We often go to the Bible for only answers. Maybe we should also go to the Bible for questions.

JUST FOR FUN

PUT IT TOGETHER

What You Need: Jigsaw puzzle divided into several bags

What You Do: Divide your group up into smaller groups. Give each group a bag with pieces to a puzzle. Have each group work on their puzzle. What they don't know is that no team has the complete item. As they start working, they realize that the other team has part of what they need. Soon they realize that they only have a part of the whole. They can only complete the puzzle if they work together.

To introduce it, tell them the goal is to assemble the puzzle as quickly as possible using what is provided. All teams have the same puzzle. You will receive no further instructions.

Goal: Mesh the group together into a unit that works together.

GUMDROP TOWER

What You Need: Gumdrops or Dots, toothpicks

What You Do: Divide your group into groups of 2-3 and invite them to create a tower out of gumdrops/dots and toothpicks. Smaller groups may choose to work all together to make a large structure.

Guidelines:

- No talking
- Each person can either use only gumdrops or only toothpicks

Goal: Teamwork!