

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Wrestling & Identity

November 2 & 3, 2019

For Jacob, wrestling with God was a physical reality, but for us that wrestling match is usually emotional and intellectual. Moving from the simplistic, concrete realities of a “Sunday School faith” to a embracing the nuance, mystery and paradox of a maturing faith is a mighty wrestling match indeed! we often discover our deeper identity by resting in the mystery of God’s love that transcends our ability to fully understand.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: GENESIS 32:22-30

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

As children most of us are taught a vision of God that sound a lot like Santa. But then we live some life. We experience hardship, human suffering and the consequences of our own (often foolish or selfish) choices. And the old vision of God no longer works. And so, we wrestle with God. We often do it with the intention of figuring God out, but by grace we often learn that God is a mystery we cannot fully fathom or control, and so we limp through life by faith alone. Notice that this wrestling match happens on the banks of the Jordan River, a symbol of transition from one way of being to another. That was certainly true for Jacob, and often for us when we wrestle with God.

Notice that this event happens when Jacob has been separated from his possessions and his community. It’s as if wrestling with God is something we can only do on our own. At the very least it can feel like a lonely and even frightening experience. When you think about it, it’s pretty amazing that God is willing to wrestle with us at all. It says something about the nature and character of God, that God would engage with us in our “mess” rather than just smiting us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When have you wrestled with God? Over what? What happened?
- How has your wrestling with God shaped you?
- What do you think it means that God could not prevail over Jacob in this wrestling match?
- Why do you think God dislocates Jacob’s hip and gives him a limp? Has God ever given you a limp?

APPLICATION: This week, reflect on a time when you wrestled with God in your story. How did that experience effect you? What is one way you can see that in your daily life?