

Kev's sermon notes for eGroups

Sunday, May 2, 2021

Elevation Church - Broadcasting from Ballantyne Campus – Charlotte, NC USA

Pastor: Steven Furtick

Sermon Title: "The Bethel Revelation - It has Always Been In You – Our covenant with God has always been with us - What God Puts in You Needs to Get Out – And What is in You should never diminish God – When you are in a difficult situation and if you have no idea if you are going to survive, God calls you back to the place of the greatest fear and where you still made it anyway – Bethel is the place we go back to a place of our greatest fear – Otherwise we will forget what is in us – There is something in you that is greater than what is on you – Don't continue to wear the shame – Don't let people put anything on you that diminishes your covenant with God – Don't forget what is in you – Returning to Bethel means returning to the seed of the promise – Don't let what is on you kill what is in you.

Elevation Worship and Maverick City Music + Branden Lakes – new album to be released this week.

- **My Testimony** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NyH9mDYEck>
- **Shall Not Want** – New Song - Lyrics by Steven Furtick, Chandler Moore, Naomi Raine, Chris Brown - Will You be my light, when I cannot see - When I can't take another step, Lord, would You carry me - When I've lost my fight, will You be my strength - Will You set me a table in the presence of my enemies - I shall not want, I shall not want - Oh my soul's got a shepherd in the valley and I shall not want - I shall not want, I shall not want - Cause my cup's running over, running over and I shall not want - I will lift my eyes to where my help comes from - And I won't be afraid of the shadow cause I've seen the sun - No I will not stop, when the way gets hard - Cause the green only grows in the valley and that's where You are - I got goodness and I got mercy - Hallelu, glory hallelujah - The Good Shepherd leads me to the waters - Hallelu, glory hallelujah - He anoints me, anoints me with His oil - Hallelu, glory hallelujah - Now my cup is, my cup is running over - Hallelu, glory hallelujah - I won't fear, no, fear no evil - Hallelu, glory hallelujah - I will dwell in His house forever - Hallelu, glory hallelujah - Hallelujah hallelujah - Hallelu, glory hallelujah - When this life is over, I'm gonna live again - Gonna trade this cross for a crown - No, this is not the end - When You call my name, I will take my rest - There's a mansion in glory and You're gonna - I shall not want, I shall not want - He will wipe every tear from my eyes - I shall not want - I shall not want, I shall not want - I'll be home in His presence forever - I shall not want - For the Lord is my shepherd - And I shall not want
- **Old Church Basement** – New Song (Lyrics by Steven Furtick, Dante Bowe, Brandon Lake, Chandler Moore) – *"I don't see anything wrong with the lights or stages - I even love it when the crowd gets loud singing out God's praises - But every now and then it can get a little complicated - So I remember when I was in that old church basement, singing - Hallelujah is all I need - When I think of your goodness and your love for me - Oh the joy of my salvation - Is coming back to me It's just an old hallelujah with a new melody. We got together every Wednesday night - About 30 teenagers - My friend Josh bought a cheap guitar and barely knew how to play it - He wasn't putting on a show, wasn't well known, wasn't trying to be famous - But we sure touched heaven in that old church basement. Great is thy faithfulness Lord unto me - It's just an old hallelujah with a new melody - I once was blind but now I can see - It's just an old hallelujah with a new melody - Over the mountains and the sea your river runs - with love for me - It's just an old hallelujah with a new melody - Shout to the Lord all the earth let us sing - It's just an old hallelujah with a new melody."*
- **Jireh** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mC-zw0zCCtg>

- **Build Your Church** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wegtdmbeuh0>

Scripture for this week:

- Gen 34: 30 to end: Dinah and the Shechemites - 34 Now Dinah, the daughter Leah had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the women of the land. 2 When Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, the ruler of that area, saw her, he took her and raped her. 3 His heart was drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob; he loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her. 4 And Shechem said to his father Hamor, "Get me this girl as my wife." 5 When Jacob heard that his daughter Dinah had been defiled, his sons were in the fields with his livestock; so he did nothing about it until they came home. 6 Then Shechem's father Hamor went out to talk with Jacob. 7 Meanwhile, Jacob's sons had come in from the fields as soon as they heard what had happened. They were shocked and furious, because Shechem had done an outrageous thing in Israel by sleeping with Jacob's daughter—a thing that should not be done. 8 But Hamor said to them, "My son Shechem has his heart set on your daughter. Please give her to him as his wife. 9 Intermarry with us; give us your daughters and take our daughters for yourselves. 10 You can settle among us; the land is open to you. Live in it, trade in it, and acquire property in it." 11 Then Shechem said to Dinah's father and brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and I will give you whatever you ask. 12 Make the price for the bride and the gift I am to bring as great as you like, and I'll pay whatever you ask me. Only give me the young woman as my wife." 13 Because their sister Dinah had been defiled, Jacob's sons replied deceitfully as they spoke to Shechem and his father Hamor. 14 They said to them, "We can't do such a thing; we can't give our sister to a man who is not circumcised. That would be a disgrace to us. 15 We will enter into an agreement with you on one condition only: that you become like us by circumcising all your males. 16 Then we will give you our daughters and take your daughters for ourselves. We'll settle among you and become one people with you. 17 But if you will not agree to be circumcised, we'll take our sister and go." 18 Their proposal seemed good to Hamor and his son Shechem. 19 The young man, who was the most honored of all his father's family, lost no time in doing what they said, because he was delighted with Jacob's daughter. 20 So Hamor and his son Shechem went to the gate of their city to speak to the men of their city. 21 "These men are friendly toward us," they said. "Let them live in our land and trade in it; the land has plenty of room for them. We can marry their daughters and they can marry ours. 22 But the men will agree to live with us as one people only on the condition that our males be circumcised, as they themselves are. 23 Won't their livestock, their property and all their other animals become ours? So let us agree to their terms, and they will settle among us." 24 All the men who went out of the city gate agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male in the city was circumcised. 25 Three days later, while all of them were still in pain, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and attacked the unsuspecting city, killing every male. 26 They put Hamor and his son Shechem to the sword and took Dinah from Shechem's house and left. 27 The sons of Jacob came upon the dead bodies and looted the city where[c] their sister had been defiled. 28 They seized their flocks and herds and donkeys and everything else of theirs in the city and out in the fields. 29 They carried off all their wealth and all their women and children, taking as plunder everything in the houses. **30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me obnoxious to the Canaanites and Perizzites, the people living in this land. We are few in number, and if they join forces against me and attack me, I and my household will be destroyed."** **31 But they replied, "Should he have treated our sister like a prostitute?"**

- Gens 35: 10 to 11: Jacob Returns to Bethel - **35 Then God said to Jacob, “Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau.” 2 So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes. 3 Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone.” 4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the oak at Shechem. 5 Then they set out, and the terror of God fell on the towns all around them so that no one pursued them. 6 Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan. 7 There he built an altar, and he called the place El Bethel, because it was there that God revealed himself to him when he was fleeing from his brother. 8 Now Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died and was buried under the oak outside Bethel. So it was named Allon Bakuth. 9 After Jacob returned from Paddan Aram,[c] God appeared to him again and blessed him. 10 God said to him, “Your name is Jacob, but you will no longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel.” So he named him Israel. 11 And God said to him, “I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants. 12 The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you, and I will give this land to your descendants after you.” 13 Then God went up from him at the place where he had talked with him. 14 Jacob set up a stone pillar at the place where God had talked with him, and he poured out a drink offering on it; he also poured oil on it. 15 Jacob called the place where God had talked with him Bethel.**
- Isaiah 40: **31 29 to 31: He gives strength to the weary, and increases the power of the weak. 30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31 but those who hope in the Lord - will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.**
- Gens 32 - Jacob Wrestles With God - **22 That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. 24 So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. 25 When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. 26 Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” 27 The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered. 28 Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”**
- Gens 33
- Jeremiah 31: **31 to 33: 23 The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 24 “Have you not noticed that these people are saying, ‘The Lord has rejected the two kingdoms he chose’? So they despise my people and no longer regard them as a nation. 25 This is what the Lord says: ‘If I have not made my covenant with day and night and established the laws of heaven and earth, 26 then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his sons to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and have compassion on them.’”**

Sermon Title: “The Bethel Revelation - It has Always Been In You – Our covenant with God has always been with us - What God Puts in You Needs to Get Out – And What is in You should never diminish God

– When you are in a difficult situation and if you have no idea if you are going to survive, God calls you back to the place of the greatest fear and where you still made it anyway – Bethel is the place we go back to a place of our greatest fear – Otherwise we will forget what is in us – There is something in you that is greater than what is on you – Don't continue to wear the shame – Don't let people put anything on you that diminishes your covenant with God – Don't forget what is in you – Returning to Bethel means returning to the seed of the promise – Don't let what is on you kill what is in you.

- **Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone? – See www.elevationchurch.cc.**
- **Interested in joining Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in leading an eGroup? See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Interested in attending or leading a watch party: See: www.elevationchurch.cc**
- **Here Comes Church:**
 - Interested in serving at Elevation Church: See: www.elevationchurch.cc
 - Please consider joining an eGroup (small group) so you don't have to walk this walk alone – See www.elevationchurch.cc. When you are isolated you are an easy target for the enemy – and you don't have the benefit of friends to support you. Embrace the power of numbers.
 - Old Church Basement – album released this week – quote: “From Going back to the place where we discovered worship for the first time – not a physical place - accessing our first love (within ourselves) – bringing you back to a pure place – absent of self-consciousness.” “Our prayer is that his album pierces through the darkness and creates light in people's lives.”
 - See the video from Pastor Furtick interviewing Bishop TD Jakes virtually on Wed. April 21, 2021 at 7PM (EST) as Bishop Jakes launched a new book – Don't Drop The Mic. This will be broadcasted on the Elevation YouTube channel.
 - Pop-up watch party in Philadelphia with 50 baptisms and outreach events.
- **Opening prayer by Pastor Furtick on Sunday, May 2, 2021 - “Give God a great praise from your heart – Let everything that has breath praise the Lord – Declare this with your mouth: God is building His church. Relentlessly and effectively God's purpose will be accomplished – despite all the plans by the enemy over your life, God has you right here for a reason. God is in abundance and available to you – In a greater measure and larger than your room to receive it. Open your heart right now – To him who is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine (Ep 3:20) – to him be the glory in Christ Jesus.”**
- **Opening prayer #2 by Pastor Furtick on Sunday, May 2, 2021: “I thank God for what he's doing and what he's going to do – Lord we join our voices in our hearts right now – we declare that each one of these new songs will tell a story in the years to come (following the release of the album Church Basement) – Lord, I thank you for your faithfulness – God we thank you for Maverick City Music – we thank you for what you were doing through these gifted psalmists composers, and worship leaders – please make sure that your hand of favor is put on everything that they do – I pray that they continue to walk in divine cooperation with you – we ask that creativity continues to flow – we ask that you continue to provide**

wisdom and direction – thank you for all the sacrifices that were made for this movement of God – I pray a great grace on them – I pray that you give them peace and abundance – we join our faith together as one – one body – proclaiming that the gates of hell will not prevail – thank you Father – thank you Lord. In Jesus name amen.”

- See Gen 34: 20 to Gen 35:12.
- NIV version says in Gen 35: 11-12 says Kings will come from your body.
- Today I want to preach to you with a title “It Has Always Been in You.”
- **Opening prayer #3 on 5/2/2021: “What God showed me in this text is so amazing and I ask for his help now – for the flower withers by your word stands forever – and we thank the engrafted word is able to save our souls – As the rain falls and waters the earth and causes it to bud and flourish - so shall your word be – What proceeds from your mouth Lord will not return void – This time will not be wasted and will accomplish the purpose for which you sent it – And we all agree to this together in Jesus name we pray, amen.”**
- Recall the YouTube channel of his son producing track beats and leading tutorials.
- It has always been in you.
- **As a parent, I think a lot about how I can make sure what is in my children is what God put there and gets out – and no one puts anything on them that causes them to forget or diminish what God put in – and what they do with “it” is up to them.**
- **It is amazing to see the growth of Jacob – to eventually become the patriarch through which the entire nation of Israel came. We get to see Jacob wrestling in his mother’s womb – and then at the age 77 we see him running from Esau who Jacob had been in competition with his whole life – Then we get to see Jacob reconcile with Esau at the age of 97 - after 20 years of hiding with his uncle – where he finally makes it to Canaan (the promised land).**
- **Jacob is the grandson of Abraham – the progenitor of faith of multiple religions – talk about pressure? Jacob had to deal with a lot while getting back to Canaan. The word Jacob means to grab or to supplant (to scheme) – he was given this name will trying to grab the heel of his older brother while they were coming out of the womb as twins – and even tricked his brother to give up his right as birth right over a bowl of stew (giving up what he wanted most for what he wanted now) – A Pastor Furtick Classic: “There are no beans in this world that are that delicious – but you will be surprise what you trade away because you’re tired” – and this sent Jacob in running from Esau for the next 20 years.**
- See the Death to Selfie Series from 2014. Kev bonus study: See additional notes at the end of this document.
- Recall that Jacob had to work 14 years to win over Rachael and stayed an additional six years at his uncle’s home.
- When Jacob returns to Canaan he also reconciles with his brother. See Gen 32 and Gen 33.
- The real struggle in Jacob’s life was never with his brother – See Gen 34. When Jacob arrives in Canaan he is confronted with the “promised land problem” - when Jacob arrives in Canaan it is where God has him – yes something happens so terrible in his own family (the rape of one of his daughters) – many of us get to a place that we imagined in our mind (an age, a stage of life,

or a certain type of success or a certain accomplishment or a certain achievement) – something that you’ve got to that you worked really hard for – and no sooner can you pay for it with 100 pieces of silver – and yet disaster strikes your very own family and threatens to destroy what means the most to you – and Simeon and Levi - in an act of vengeance kill off all the males located in Shechem – and Jacob is still in danger – He is a leader but not sure of his own direction – Jacob is in a place that God had promised him – but Jacob feels the onslaught of pressure - from all that is placed on him and having to deal with the consequences of other people’s decisions.

- Have you ever had someone download all of their drama on you?
- Were the sons right to fight back and seek vengeance following the rape of their sister?
- Jacob is in the place that God promised him but he’s not safe – facing the greatest danger of his life and does not know what to do – and he’s got a lot of pressure on himself – now see what God told him to do next in Gen 35:1.
- And I want to really start preaching my sermon now.
- Gen 35 Then God said to Jacob, *“Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau.”* 2 So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, *“Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes.* 3 *Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone.”* 4 *So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the oak at Shechem.* 5 *Then they set out, and the terror of God fell on the towns all around them so that no one pursued them.* 6 *Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan.* 7 *There he built an altar, and he called the place El Bethel, because it was there that God revealed himself to him when he was fleeing from his brother.* 8 *Now Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died and was buried under the oak outside Bethel. So it was named Allon Bakuth.* 9 *After Jacob returned from Paddan Aram, God appeared to him again and blessed him.* 10 *God said to him, “Your name is Jacob, but you will no longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel.”* So he named him Israel. 11 *And God said to him, “I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants.* 12 *The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you, and I will give this land to your descendants after you.”* 13 *Then God went up from him at the place where he had talked with him. Then his people gave them all the symbols of foreign gods and trinkets and Jacob buried them.”*
- Bethel = house of God and Israel = He who struggles with God.
- **What confused me about this passage is that Jacob had been to Bethel before – The first time Jacob went to Bethel he was running from his brother Esau – this time he’s going back to Bethel based on the instructions from God – so it is different this time.**
- As pastors we tell people going through a difficult situations to go back to prior seasons where God has been good to you in your life – perhaps God brings you back to Bethel sometimes to remind you when you killed it – while you are struggling – and then again maybe God brings

you back to Bethel to remind you of things that you've accomplished – that defies your pedigree or things that you were trying to do – perhaps God brings you back to Bethel to remind yourself of all the times that you surprised yourself.

- However the more I meditate on this, the more I realize that that's not what Bethel meant to Jacob – because the first time Jacob went to Bethel he was scared to death – so now Jacob is in a place in his life where he's never been more uncertain – and God brings him back to a place where he has never been so uncertain – and when Jacob is in need of his greatest faith – God takes him back to the place of his greatest fear – the first time Jacob went to Bethel he had no idea what was going to happen next – at that time, his brother wanted to kill him and he didn't know about his uncle – Jacob was 77 years old when he first visit Bethel – to Jacob, Bethel is not a place where he shouted and danced – Jacob was not in Bethel singing praise songs and feeling goosebumps.
- **Jacob was in Bethel wondering if he was going to make it – and now God says in the present season of your life – Where are you have no idea if you have enough to defend yourself from the attack that is happening right now – Because you've got a lot on your plate right now – and some of it is your fault and some of is the product of decisions made by other people – and none of it is anything you've ever experienced before – because you're the oldest that you've ever been – and you have never progressed through this season of your life or this stage of your development – we've never been through this emotional place before – and so what does God do? He doesn't call you back to the place of greatest faith – he calls you back to the place where you had the greatest fear – but you made it anyway – to remind you of what it really felt like when God revealed himself to you – because we tend to white-wash our understanding of what it means to remember what I God did.**
- **Do you remember what it really felt during certain stages of your life? Let's close our eyes and go to an imaginary Bethel. Think about a time that you didn't think you were going to make it. Let's go there for just a moment – this is how Jacob felt during his first time in Bethel.**
- Kev bonus study: See "Death to Selfie" series from 2014: *"Week 3: WHEN GOD SHOWS UP IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE (Genesis 28:10-22, Genesis 32:10, Genesis 35:1-7, Psalm 103:2-5, Romans 12:1) – In Genesis 28, Jacob was on the run from his brother, Esau. He was traveling from the land of his father, Isaac, to the land of his relative, Laban. One night he stopped at a place called Luz, and while he was sleeping, God revealed Himself to Jacob in a dream and gave him a great promise. When Jacob woke up, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it," and he renamed the place Bethel. To Jacob, Bethel was just a rest stop. He didn't expect to meet God there. In our lives full of ambition, we often sacrifice contentment. But like Jacob, we need to wake up to God's presence in every moment. After Bethel, Jacob proceeded to the land of Laban, where he was tricked into marrying Leah, and had to work many years for the hand of Rachel, the woman he loved. It was there that he had the sons who would become the 12 tribes of Israel. He eventually had to run from Laban with his family, and 20 years after his dream, God tells him to return to Bethel and build an altar there. Often, we*

can become dissatisfied with life as we see it. However, as Pastor Steven suggested, we can “go back to Bethel” any time in our lives and remember the places where God has spoken to us.”

- **In Gen 28: 10 to 15, Jacob has a revelation - and a vision of a ladder where angels ascending and descending from heaven – and 20 years later God calls him back to the same place – called Bethel – a place where he thought he wasn’t going to make it – on the inside everything was telling Jacob that he was not going to make it – now open your eyes – you did make it. Jacob is now instructed to build an altar at the place of his greatest fear – and this is where God tells you to build an altar – and to believe in him – in Bethel.**
- **Scripture even mentions the term “the God of Bethel” – I am not sure like that phrase – because Bethel is scary – Bethel is when you don’t know – Bethel is the place where you cannot figure it out and all you have is faith – God is the God of Bethel – this is where God’s habitation is – this is where God is revealed – this is where God shows himself – this is where we get to know God – in Bethel.**
- And we find Jacob afraid and then God tells Jacob to go back to the place where you were most afraid – and to build an altar there – because if Jacob doesn’t do this, it will cause him to forget what is in him.
- **Say this: It has always been in you.**
- Go to the place where you did not think you could make it – go to the place where you didn’t know what was next – go back to the place where you learn that God is a promise keeper – to the place where you learn that God is a way maker.
- Now let’s introduce the concept of covenant – Jacob is not merely going off a good feeling – Jacob is not merely operating from his track record – Jacob is not following the guidance of a fortune cookie – Jacob is not riding an emotional high – Jacob he’s not operating from a place where he just got a momentary inspiration from a single Bible verse – it is a covenant.
- **In the Bible a covenant can be with another person (Kev note see Gen 15) – the term covenant is used in the context of marriage – the Bible tells that my relationship with God is not based on my behavior but rather a covenant with God.**
- **My relationship with God is not the same covenant that Jacob had – Jacob had a covenant with God they basically said that God was with him – and that’s awesome and we should thank God that’s true for us as well – From our perspective, we cannot keep up our end of the bargain – Can we actually follow God perfectly through every season of our lives? No. Of course, in the valley we fail – of course during hard times we are led astray – of course our hearts are drawn to worship other gods that we can see – instead of the God we can’t see and can’t figure out.**
- See Jeremiah 31: 31 to 33: 23 The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 24 “Have you not noticed that these people are saying, ‘The Lord has rejected the two kingdoms he chose’? So they despise my people and no longer regard them as a nation. 25 This is what the Lord says: ‘If I have not made my covenant with day and night and established the laws of heaven and earth, 26 then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of

his sons to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and have compassion on them.’”

- Jeremiah declares that God is the husband of the people of Israel and this is the covenant that I will declare – what Jeremiah is saying here is that I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts – that is in the inside - for what the law was powerless to do, in that it was weekend by the sinful nature of man – so I did by sending his son Jesus in the likeness of sinful man.
- Kev additional study: See: Romans 8 (NIV) – *“Life Through the Spirit - 8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”*
- **We don’t have the Jacob covenant – we have the Jesus covenant – we have the type of covenant that whatever is put on us – God put something in us that is greater than what is put on us – and we all have a lot on us – but I came to preach today to tell you that there is something in you that is always greater than what is on you.**
- Are you getting this revelation? It is in us.
- God is with us because he is in us.
- So – going back to Bethel – going back to that place means that anything that someone puts on you is never bigger than what is inside of you.
- **See Gen 35:2-3 – Jacob tells his people to change their clothes – we need to take this stuff off us – because if his people go back to Bethel dressed like they were in Shechem, they will not fully realize what God has put in them. For Jacobs family Shechem represented shame. The shame of what had been done to Dinah – The shame of what Dinah’s brothers had done in response. And we need to realize this as well – if we go into what God has for us wearing the shame of what was done to us, never realize what is inside of us – we have to get “it” off of us. Layers of guilt will undermine our gift. Focusing on our insecurities and shortcomings will undermine our ability to minister to others. What is on you will make you forget what is in you.**
- **We have to realize that the pressures that life puts on us – things like offense – things like bitterness - keep us from remembering what is in us – and if we really go back to Bethel and remember – we realize that it’s always been in us – and what we have to be so careful about it’s not letting people put anything on you (both success and failure) that is greater that what God put in us.**
- Jacob’s biggest issue is that he always identified himself by something external – so when it came time to make peace with his older brother Esau, he sent gifts ahead of him – thinking maybe that perhaps his gift would bring himself peace – and some of us are like that - always needing to try to make a good impression – always living as an avatar of ourselves (**Kev note**

from 2014 during Pastor Furtick's "Death to Selfie" Series: "God can't bless an avatar of our ourselves.") – always living in a version of ourselves that appears to be presentable – only identifying ourselves by what we can do – and then thinking that all we are is what we do – Jesus reminds us that what good is it to conquer the world and lose ourselves -

- **Jacob changed his name from heal-grabber/supplanter (schemer) to Israel - Israel = He who struggles with God.**
- **God is trying to convince Jacob that he's never been fighting with Esau. The fight that Jacob has to win in his life is not with Esau or his uncle – it has always been in him – God says to Jacob: Before you were born I put it in you – It has always been in you – Jacob has to get past all the stuff he put on himself – and we need to get past all the things that we put on ourselves – it has always been in you – it just takes the right amount of rain to grow the seed that is inside you – and there's no person on earth that can keep us from the covenant God has with us – you're not in covenant with a person – we are not in covenant with a political party – we are only in covenant with God Almighty.**
- Get the crap off you – that is not your station – this is not your name – this is not your end – it is in us – It is God that is within you – the struggle has never been with someone else – it has always been within yourself – and God gave Jacob a new name – Israel – but Jacob still has to struggle.
- Are you confused? Because I am.
- See Gen 32 – Jacob had to make peace with Jacob -
- Gens 32 – *"Jacob Wrestles With God - 22 That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. 24 So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. 25 When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. 26 Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. 28 Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome."*
- So why is God telling Jacob again in Gen 35 that his name is Israel? What is it what God said or what God did not say to Jacob to show us what we need to know about the struggles we find ourselves in – During the first visit to Bethel God focused on Jacob struggle – Jacob is called Israel because he struggled with man and has overcome – during Jacobs second visit to Bethel garden not mention his prior struggle – this time God mentioned his seed – because Israel was more than a name – Israel was not just a name – it was a nation – And Simeon and Levi (teenage sons of Jacob that brought all of the trouble) would become the fore fathers that God would use to birth a nation – through which God would extend his covenant – with all peoples.
- But we will never produce our nation if we do not know our name.
- So this word is for anyone that has so much on them in the form of shame, regret, or pressure or things that make you anxious – have you forgotten what is in you?

- **Closing Prayer by Pastor Furtick:** This season of your life will be a Bethel that you return to in future days – there are kings and royalty in you – there are crowns in you – there is legacy in you – there are dreams in you – there is ministry in you – there is healing in you – there are things that God desires to release through your life – that will change the generations that share your last name – So do not let what is on you kill what is inside of you – you are Israel – there are nations in you – and have always been in you – the gift has always been in you – and so has the fear – and they both wrestle with each other in the same womb until the day that you die – Do not let any setback or anyone put a different name on you – to cause you to forfeit what God has within you – Are there things that you need to bury under the oak at Shechem today? And I believe God wants to turn this church into a changing room today – where external stuff does not matter – what matters to God has always been in you – and God wants to establish a covenant within you – Yes, you have a covenant with God – Have you made your struggle a covenant that is greater than the covenant you have with God? Let God deal with your terror and fear – Pay attention to what is in you – God knows what is in you – God sees all of your multi-tasking – and God knows all of that – God also knows that you do not know what is next – and this is why God gave me the Bethel revelation today – He is the God of Bethel – The God of “I don’t know what is next” – Father allow the Holy Spirit to write this on our hearts – Christ in us is the hope of our glory – let’s go back to Bethel and build an altar in the place of our anxiety – Let’s build an altar in the place of our fear – Let’s build an altar in response to our questions. Amen.

Kev’s bonus study:

Elevation Church Sermon Notes from Pastor Steven’s Death to Selfie series in 2014 – A five-week study of Jacob

Week 1: JUST CALL ME JACOB (Genesis 32:22-31, Genesis 25:21-26, Luke 9:25 Matthew 20:16, Exodus 3:14-15)

- Pastor Steven shared that our series is called Death to Selfie because a selfie illustrates the conflict that exists inside each of us. Just as Jacob wrestled with his family, with God, and with himself to find himself, we wrestle in the conflict between who we think we’re supposed to be and who we really are.
- Jacob had a me-first mentality. As Pastor Steven pointed out, we live in a me-first culture, in which we all subconsciously strive to be recognized. We don’t always take pride in a particular possession; we take pride in having more of that possession than someone else. We want to be thinner, smarter, or better than others.
- Jesus asked in Luke 9, “What good is it to gain the whole world and lose yourself?” We all grasp at things like status and security, but in the process of grabbing at stuff, we run the risk of losing our very selves.
- Pastor Steven explained that God cannot bless who we pretend to be. We don’t fool God with our disguises, and the blessings we get when we pretend are not even real blessings that we can fully enjoy for ourselves.
- In Exodus 3, God told Moses that He is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He didn’t say Israel, He said Jacob. He wanted to be known as the God of the guy who was a deceiver. God is not just the God of the parts of us that are pretty. He’s the God of our failures and our selfishness.

Everything in our lives will change when we admit, “I’m just Jacob,” God says, “I will be the God of Jacob too.”

Week 2: STARVING SONS (Genesis 25:24-34, Hebrews 12:15-17, Luke 15:11-24, Romans 8:29)

- In Genesis 25, Esau comes in starving from an unsuccessful hunting trip. He asks Jacob to give him a bowl of beans, and Jacob asks Esau to give him his birthright in exchange. Esau says that the birthright is no good to him since he’s dying of hunger, and agrees. The writer of Genesis even said, “Esau despised his birthright.” In reality, Esau’s birthright gave him double the inheritance, but he gave it up in a single moment for a bowl of beans. In what looks like the worst negotiation in human history, Esau gave up so much for so little. But, as Pastor Steven preached, as silly as this seems, it’s the same pattern that we still follow today.
- **BEWARE OF MISTAKING GROWTH FOR MATURITY.** As Pastor Steven remarked, we can grow up on the outside but stay small on the inside. We need to ask ourselves if we’ve really grown up or if we’re still governed by childish selfishness and impulsiveness.
- Esau got in trouble because he got too hungry. He was so hungry that he was willing to do anything to satisfy his appetite. He wanted immediate gratification, and became dramatic, saying he was about to die. Pastor Steven drew a parallel between Esau’s hunger and our spiritual hungers. When we get too hungry, everything gets blown out of proportion.
- As believers in Jesus Christ, we have a birthright, a spiritual inheritance. We possess everything that Jesus possessed because when Jesus ascended into heaven, He sent His inheritance down to us by the Holy Spirit. -But for every birthright, there is a bowl. We sell our peace by choosing to eat worrisome thoughts. We sell our joy by eating from a bowl of things to grumble about. We sell our testimonies by indulging in our tempers. -Esau chose the bowl and later tried to be restored, but was denied. Hebrews 12 would even call Esau “godless” for his mistakes. Luke 15 tells the story of another son (the Prodigal Son) who chose the bowl, but was fully restored to his father once he came to himself and realized the error of his ways. However, there’s another Son—Jesus. He was tempted with “bowls” in the desert for 40 days, but never gave in. He survived on the Word of God, not the desires of the world. And He did it so that we might have a chance to be restored as a kind of firstborn sons in God’s eyes. We’re all Esau, having chosen the bowl. But when we come to ourselves and choose Jesus, we can always be restored. We don’t have to live as starving sons anymore—God’s grace puts an end to all of that.

Week 3: WHEN GOD SHOWS UP IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE (Genesis 28:10-22, Genesis 32:10, Genesis 35:1-7, Psalm 103:2-5, Romans 12:1)

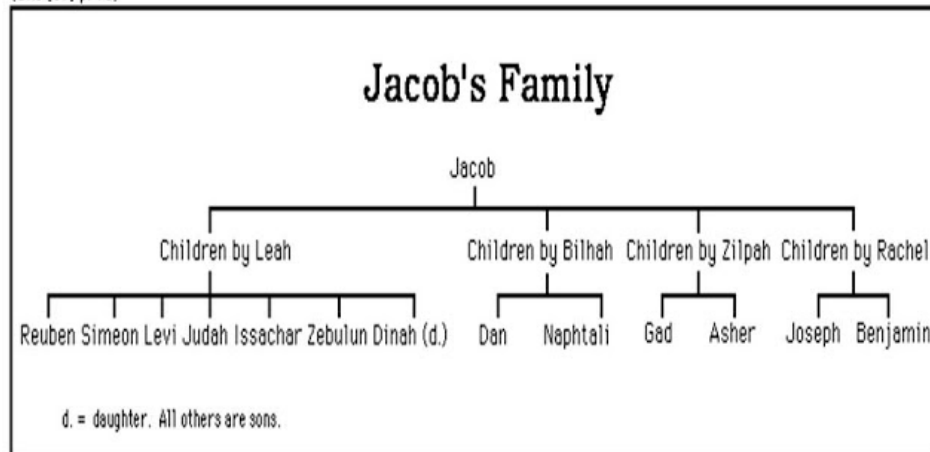
- In Genesis 28, Jacob was on the run from his brother, Esau. He was traveling from the land of his father, Isaac, to the land of his relative, Laban. One night he stopped at a place called Luz, and while he was sleeping, God revealed Himself to Jacob in a dream and gave him a great promise. When Jacob woke up, he said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it,” and he renamed the place Bethel.
- To Jacob, Bethel was just a rest stop. He didn’t expect to meet God there. In our lives full of ambition, we often sacrifice contentment. But like Jacob, we need to wake up to God’s presence in every moment.
- After Bethel, Jacob proceeded to the land of Laban, where he was tricked into marrying Leah, and had to work many years for the hand of Rachel, the woman he loved. It was there that he had the sons who would

become the 12 tribes of Israel. He eventually had to run from Laban with his family, and 20 years after his dream, God tells him to return to Bethel and build an altar there.

- Often, we can become dissatisfied with life as we see it. However, as Pastor Steven suggested, we can “go back to Bethel” any time in our lives and remember the places where God has spoken to us.
- BETHEL IS A PLACE OF REMEMBRANCE. We need to continually return to Bethel, whether we’re in success or in trouble, to remember the times God did it and no one else could have. Psalm 103 instructs us to not forget the Lord’s benefits. By doing a 360° turn to look back over our lives, we will be reminded of all those Bethel’s-- all the things God has spoken to us, done for us, and promised us.
- BETHEL IS A PLACE OF REVELATION. Pastor Steven preached, Bethel is not just a place, it’s a Person Who is with us and within us wherever we go. When God shows up in the middle of nowhere, He opens our eyes and changes NOWHERE to NOW HERE. God is here with us right now, and He’s been here all along. God doesn’t wait until we’ve “made it” to bless us.
- BETHEL IS A PLACE OF RESPONSE. -The first time at Bethel, Jacob made a conditional oath to God, saying if God did certain things, he would serve Him. But after going through struggles, Jacob returned with a limp and built an altar to God. An altar is a place of sacrifice. He was no longer negotiating his relationship with God, but laying down his life before God. Bethel makes us realize that what we really need most is God’s presence going with us through everything.

Week 4: SISTER WIVES (Genesis 29, Genesis 30:1-24, 2 Corinthians 5:20 Matthew, 1:1-2,17, Matthew 21:42)

- After his encounter with God at Bethel, Jacob precedes to the house of his uncle Laban. There he meets Laban’s beautiful daughter Rachel, and he falls in love with her. Laban agrees to let Jacob work for him seven years for Rachel’s hand in marriage. He works seven years, but on the wedding night, Laban tricks Jacob and gives him his older daughter, Leah, instead. After waking the next morning and discovering he has married Leah, Jacob goes to Laban, who agrees to give him Rachel also, if he will work another seven years.
- As Pastor Steven preached, we sow what we reap. If we live a lie, we’ll eventually wake up lying next to Leah. When we pretend to be something in order to get something, we’ll work for one thing, but we’ll wake up next to something else. Jacob’s wives are an illustration of law and of grace. He had to work seven years before marrying Leah. This illustrates the law of the Old Testament--working to get God. But Jacob married Rachel and then served his seven years for her. This illustrates grace--in Jesus we get God, then serve Him out of that love.
- Leah was not loved by Jacob, so she strove to win his love by bearing him many sons. She even gave Jacob her maidservant to get more sons for him. But even after all her striving, Jacob still didn’t love her. All of us have faced some sort of rejection, like Leah. We try to earn acceptance through achievements. We think that maybe the next job, getting the next A, doing that next thing will make “them” finally accept us. But as Pastor Steven proclaimed, “What Jacob rejects is what God selects.” When God saw that Leah was not loved, He enabled her to conceive. God looks at what people don’t want, and says, “I choose you.” We all have flaws and defects that cause us to be rejected, but God chooses us.
- God chose Leah to bear Judah, whose name means praise. From the line of Judah, God brought forth Jesus, the Savior of the world. Pastor Steven declared that when God wants to bring Jesus to a generation, He always chooses the Leahs, the rejected ones. We are a chosen people, set apart to bring Jesus to the world.



- As Pastor Steven said, it's possible to be like Rachel, outwardly looking like we've got it together, but inwardly hurting and miserable. Just because someone's life looks beautiful from the outside, doesn't mean it's fruitful on the inside. We're all struggling with something, and we need to be careful thinking someone else's life is perfect because we have no idea what they're going through. We live in a world that emphasizes external beauty so much that many people have figured out how to be liked by people, but don't really like themselves.
- The sisters' struggles with rejection and frustration resulted in a big complicated family mess. But while all they saw was the mess, God saw the nation of Israel being formed. The twelve sons that came from these sisters became the twelve tribes of Israel. God worked through the mess to fulfill His promise to Abraham. - When we face rejection and frustration, we need to remember that it's not about us. It's about something much greater.

Week 5: CALL IT WHAT YOU WANT (Genesis 35:16-21, Genesis 26:18, Romans 4:16-17, Luke 1:5-25; 57-80)

- As Jacob is heading back home, he is expectant of good things ahead for he and Rachel. There was great joy in the camp when Rachel began to give birth; there was a sense of joy that God was blessing Rachel and Jacob. But then, she begins to have 'great difficulty' in labor. Sometimes we ask God for things that we don't know how much it will cost or the magnitude of the request. Rachel prayed for this child for so long but she did not know it would cost her very life. They called the midwife and she said, 'Don't despair because you have another son.' As she breathed her last breath, Rachel says that her son should be named Ben-oni, which means 'son of my sorrow.' Ben-oni could also possibly mean 'son of my strength.' No one is quite sure; she is naming him out of her pain. In fact, Rachel never even had the opportunity to hold the child that she'd prayed for over so many years. Pastor Steven preached, 'At all times in your life, there is something that is being born and something that is dying. There is something new that God is giving life to and others that are dying. It's not 'all good' for anyone. As they report to Jacob, we imagine that he was conflicted; he wanted to honor Rachel and her chosen name of Ben-oni, but he deliberately changes his son's name to Benjamin and removes the ambiguity surrounding his name. Jacob declares, 'I will not let my son be called 'my son of my sorrow.' I refuse to look at him as a burden.'
- Pastor Steven preached, 'Often times, true strength is only produced by great sorrow; maybe someone's strength in a situation was born out of a time of sorrow in their life.' In ancient culture, the father had the

official naming rights. Knowing this, Jacob overrides her recommendation and declares his name will be 'Benjamin', which means 'son of my right hand.' The right hand is the hand of blessing; the father takes the right hand to bless the first born son. Jacob is declaring, 'I choose to call him a blessing. Pastor Steven said, 'If life has labeled you in some way outside of God's word, take the label off because the only one who gets to name you is the one who made you.' Then he expounded, 'There are some situations in your life that you need to rename, and there will be a blessing in it when you do.'

- Pastor shared the example of Pastor Levi Lusko who lost his daughter to an asthma attack. The family refers to her death as, 'When Lenya went to heaven' and not when 'Lenya died.' This is a great example of renaming a tragedy in your life. They recognized that this is not the end of Lenya life! She is in heaven with Jesus In verse 20, it says that Jacob set up a pillar, blessed Benjamin, and then the text refers to him as 'Israel.' It says that 'Israel moved on.' Pastor Steven continued, 'That's a message to us. It's not too late to move on' Jacob moved on with some losses and with a broken heart. He moved on without the one he had given the best years of his life to and for. But he still moved on again.