

Thinking Differently XI — Dr James McDonald Study Notes

2016-10-23

How to renew your mind. If it were easy, we'd all be doing it; the fact is, it is difficult to think differently.

Strongholds are just that; they are strong!

Nothing is different until we think differently about God, ourselves, and our ways.

Jacob is a person that I don't think I would want as a leader of anything in my church. I'm not sure if I'd be too happy if he tried to join our church. As a leader and a shepherd, he's one sheep I wouldn't want in my flock because I know he's going to be trouble.

Give me a Moses or even a David who has a major fall, but who recovers and returns to being a godly man, humble, genuine, and loves the Lord.

I'm not sure Jacob ever really got it; you're not going to find the "I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back" part of his life.

"Be an example to others", this phrase is applied as if it's optional, but, in fact, we are examples no matter what we do. Jacob is an example of what not to do with your life!

1. Sin not removed and pain not resolved will always plague your best intentions to think differently.

The two major sin themes in The life of Jacob are lying and sexual sin. His name means cheat, he indulges in sexual sin also; having two wives was over the top, but jumps right in when an additional two more are suggested (middle-eastern Hugh Hefner!)

His sexual stuff is in every place **Gen. 2:24** One man one woman for life was God's plan from the beginning.

Dad never really got it together, so his sons fell into all kinds of sin which plagued him in his old age (not the least of which was tricking their father about their selling his favorite son, Joseph, to slave traders).

Sin, not dealt with will always plague you and bring heartache into your life.

Relent, repent, remove. "God you are right, I'm wrong"; make no provision for the flesh.

Sin not removed will return with a vengeance and ruin you.

Things that we do instead of removing sin:

1. We set it aside. It's just not in my way right now, not really tempting me, so I'm OK, but when the pressure is on in the storms of life, we run right back to it.

0. We stuff it down inside and say we won't do it anymore.
1. We seek a replacement. I won't do that anymore by replacing it with something that isn't as bad. (supposedly)
2. Scenery change; "all my sin is in another church, community, job, and marriage, but I'm not there anymore, so the sin is gone." The thinking is that the problem was there and now that we are here, it won't follow; but we never got personal victory over our part of the issue.

2. Pain not resolved will plague your best intentions.

Gen. 29:25. Jacob wakes up with the ugly sister; there is lots of anger in his life over this deception. 31:6-7 Still bitter (how does bitterness toward "loved ones" affect a family?)

God is constantly with him throughout it all standing beside him and calling him back to Himself.

How to resolve pain: Sometimes the pain is a bigger issue than the sin; the sin is repented and turned away from, but the pain is bigger than your self will.

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1. Name it; first, call it what it is/was, write it out; "this is what happened and how I felt about it." If you really want to get past it, face it, speak clearly about it, and **rename it** (God is big into renaming things because sin has placed its mark everywhere, so God is going through and remarking what is His.) Don't call it what evil intended, but what God did through it.
Name the grace that covers, not the sin that caused it.
Stop calling it what sin does, and start calling it what grace does.
2. Grieve what you've lost, time, relationships, and expectations. Can't really leave unless you grieve it.
3. Leave it; "that season is over for me; it's not in charge of my life anymore", "I'm facing it and the blood of Jesus covers and forgives all sin."
"God has and is redeeming this and I am moving on."