

**WELCOME** (15 minutes)

- **Ice Breaker:** What is an event in your life that you didn't understand at the time but later realized God used to bless your life?

**WORSHIP** (10 minutes)

- Sing together #7, "Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)" from the **2015 Worship CD**.

**WIN** (15 minutes)

- **PRAY** for your list of unsaved friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family!
- **PLAN** an upcoming fun event you can do together to reach out to these people.

**WORD** (25 minutes)

**Read:** In this session, we will see that despite the dysfunction of Isaac's family, the deception of Jacob, the despondency of Esau, God is committed to His plan to redeem a people from all the nations on the planet through the offspring of this family – Jesus of Nazareth.

**Discussion:** Respond to this quote from J.D. Greear: "In the great mystery of grace, God commandeers even our stupid decisions to accomplish His purposes in us."

***Have everyone open their Bibles to Genesis 27***

Point #1 – God's plan goes forward through a dysfunctional family - Have someone read aloud Gen. 27:1-17.

**Discuss:** Genesis paints an unflattering picture of Abraham and his offspring. We see them lie, cheat, and manipulate, pass off their wives as their sisters to get the heat off themselves, play favorites with their sons, and deceive in order to get what they wanted. In what ways does the dysfunction in your life or family discourage you from engaging in God's plan or mission? How does the story of God's continual grace through messed-up people free you to be part of His plan?

Point #2 – God's plan goes forward through a deceitful son - Have someone read aloud Gen. 27:18-29.

**Discuss:** Jacob schemed and lied to get what he wanted. We are often no different than Jacob. We want others to have a certain opinion of us, so we bend the truth. We want more money for ourselves, so we lie to the government on our taxes. A craving to

manipulate a desired outcome fuels lying! In what kind of situations do we find it easiest to lie? What do these situations tell us about what our heart is craving?

**Read:** Notice that the words of blessing Isaac uttered over Jacob were basically a restating of the promises to Abraham. Hippolytus (circa 170-236) said, “If one believes that this blessing was accomplished in Jacob, he is mistaken. [It is accomplished] in nobody else but Christ, Son of God.”

**Discuss:** What hope does it give you to know that God works even through our deceit and sinfulness to accomplish His plan?

Point #3 – God’s plan goes forward through a despondent son - Have someone read aloud Gen. 27:30-40.

**Discuss:** Often we need to be reminded that what we want for our lives isn’t always what God wants for our lives. He is in control, and His ways are best. How does the truth that God’s plan is always working out help you face the surprises, disappointments, and hardships of your daily life?

**Discuss:** Have someone read aloud Hebrews 12:16-17. The author of Hebrews described Esau as “immoral” and “irreverent”, unable to find an opportunity for repentance, even though he was grieved by his circumstances. Theodoret of Cyr (circa 390-457) said, “Esau wept but did not repent; instead he envied his brother’s prosperity.” Why is it so important that we submit and trust God’s plans in our grief and disappointment?

**Read:** Like Jacob, we seek a blessing that is not ours, but we cannot lie, deceive, or trick enough to receive it. Instead, Jesus shared His blessing with us when He took the judgment we deserve so that we might receive the blessing He deserved.

**For next time encourage your people to read: Genesis 29-35.**

## **WORKS**                    *(25 minutes)*

- Break into smaller groups of **2 or 3’s of the same gender** to pray for each other!