

Sermon Notes

September 11, 2005

Trinity United Methodist Church

“Fragile Glory” Dr. Dan Johnson, preaching Genesis 32:22-32

Setting the Stage for Jacob’s Wrestling with God:

Genesis 25-27 - Conniving, striving, struggling, manipulating Jacob being Jacob (the Striver).

Genesis 28 - Jacob’s ladder and a sense of awe, the awareness of God.

Genesis 29-31 - Uncle Laban, Jacob’s mirror image; Hello!

Jacob at Jabbok (Genesis 32)

The poem, “Wrestling of Jacob” is the distillation of Charles Wesley’s greatest work (see page 387 in the United Methodist Hymnal and the bulletin insert).

Said Dr. Isaac Watts: “That single poem was worth all the verses he himself had written.” This story of Jacob and Wesley’s poem are at the heart of Wesleyan United Methodist theology.

Name Change, from Jacob to Israel: “You have struggled with God and man and have prevailed.”

The story of Jacob is an affirmation that it is a good thing for God’s people to be passionate and prevailing.

A needed corrective to “weak and submissive” notion of Christ’s followers.

A case against overly authoritarian types of religious faith that docilizes people.

A case for strong, vibrant, passionate followers of Jesus.

See J. Wallace Hamilton’s *Ride the Wild Horses* -

Struggle and striving is far better than indifference or passivity

“In all intimate struggles, especially within the family, one does not really seek a decisive victory, but rather respect, and only from an equal or superior is respect worth having.”

Simon - Peter, the Rock

James and John - Sons of Thunder

Saul - Paul

Finally, the limits of self-sufficiency; Jacob now walks with a limp, a reminder for all time of our dependence on God.