

VICTORIA BAPTIST CHURCH –YOUTH WORK

Sunday morning teaching plan



Date: 20th October 2024

TITLE:	Jacob: Promises Promises
THEME:	God promises big things but Jacob struggles to see beyond his own life.
AIM:	YPs should understand God's vision is bigger than their life situation

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Jacob is not a great bloke! He is a cheater and deceiver. He has cheated his brother out of his inheritance and his father's blessing. He has disrespected his family to the point his brother wants him dead! His life is a mess. His father sends him away from home to live 900kms away to the north where his mother's family live, in order to find a wife! Perhaps he will find refuge there! He has nothing with him. He is all alone and totally unprepared for the journey. He feels isolated and alone. We too can find ourselves in a mess and feel abandoned or cast out by friends. Don't panic, God has a plan!

WARM UP

Play: Stand up sit down. Everyone stand up. Read out statements, sit down if you have done them.

MAIN TEACHING

Read together Genesis 28:10-22 / watch Cheesy video

Activity.

Use printed sheets with the text of the story. And two highlighters

In pairs highlight God's promises to Jacob and Jacob's promises to God.

1. Compare the promises. Whose promises are greater?
2. Who has put conditions on their promises?

Key teaching: God promises Jacob the same as he promised his grandfather Abraham. He promises to watch over him and return him to the land. There are no conditions, Jacob has not earned this or deserved it. It is God's grace and mercy to him. On the other hand, Jacob promises to worship God and commit to the Lord only if...God keeps him safe, provides food for him, clothes him etc. Jacob's vision of God is much smaller than God is offering. **Sometimes we can be so focussed on our life situation and wanting God to sort out our life that we miss what He is really promising us... something much greater!**

Remember, Jacob was not a nice guy! Yet God still chooses him and promises to bless him!

What other promises has God made? Ask if YPs know any ? Can they quote?

(there are about 7000 promises God makes to us in the Bible)

Activity

Work in pairs

Use the Bible Promise sheet to identify some of the promises God has made.

Once completed take some feedback and discuss...

Does God always keep His promises? How do they know?

In what ways do we behave like Jacob? (If you do this I will believe!)

Why is this the wrong approach to God?

Key Teaching: God's very nature is perfect and truthful. He cannot break a promise. Sometimes the way He keeps His promises is not as we expect. Sometimes our desires make us think that God is not keeping His promises, but we need to realise that God's purposes override our needs. However, He still loves, provides and blesses those who trust in Him. It is easy for us to treat God like a "slot machine." We put our requests and promises in and God responds! This is wrong. God is God and our response to Him should be one of trust in His promises, not trying to bargain with Him. When we trust wholeheartedly our experience will be that God responds to us in love, mercy, forgiveness and grace.

Optional extra activity:

Look up Genesis 11:1-9 Tower of Babel. Compare it with Jacob's dream in Gen 28:12-13

What is Man trying to do by his own efforts? What is God promising instead? What does the staircase represent?

Key teaching: Babel represents man's efforts to reach God and be proud of it. The Ladder is God offering a connection without human effort. It is grace!

TAKEAWAY

God's promises to us are much greater than we can ever promise to Him. God initiates a relationship with us. He wants to bless us. Our role is to accept, trust and love God, not to bargain with Him.

Reflection: Journaling activity: Proverbs 3:5-6

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES/ RESOURCES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxBulCHFbTg>

Jacob's ladder activity sheet

Bible promises activity sheet

Bible journaling Proverbs 3:5-6