

# Life & Times of Jacob

## Pt1!

### Overview

I don't know that I'll stay on this series for next Sunday, of course, with everything else that's going on. But today's the first of a series of messages that I'm going to share with you out of the book of Genesis, everything to do with Jacob. So I'm going to be talking about Jacob in a number of ways. So we're about to go online in just a moment. I'll know as soon as I see some numbers clicking up there. And I don't. . . Is the clock running? It's not moving, so I don't know if you're on or not. Apparently we're on. Okay, that's good to know. So I'm going to read for you this morning out of Book of Genesis, and chapter 25. So in verse 21, now Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife, because Rebecca, his wife, was barren, and the Lord granted his plea, and Rebecca, his wife, conceived.

But the children struggled together within her, and she said, if all is well, why am I like this? She was troubled. They asked the Lord to give her a child. I think that she and Isaac had been together for 20 years, and she was barren. Then he asked the Lord for children, and the Lord answers, and then she's upset with how it's unfolding. And I guess we should say rightfully so, because there was a war, a civil war going on inside of her womb. So she's asking the Lord, is this the real plan? Like, why am I experiencing this? So she inquires of the Lord, and we don't know exactly what process that took. Jewish rabbis have their take on it, and I prefer not to run down that rabbit path, because we have no way for sure of knowing. But we do know that the Lord answered her in a way that she clearly understood.

And the answer came, two nations are in your womb. Two people shall be separated from your body. One people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger. So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over. So they called his name Esau. Afterward, his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel. So his name was called Jacob. Isaac was at that time, 60 years of age. So the boys grew, and Esau was a hunter, a skillful hunter, a man of the field. But he was a man of the field, but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebecca loved Jacob. I should entitle this message this morning, the blessing, the blessing.

And that's actually going to be the foundation of this series. messages that I'm working on and organizing to share with you. I've had much to say about blessing as of the last six months or even more. And for those of you who might be newer here, the word blessing in the original Hebrew is just as much readily translated as to kneel down. Because in the Hebrew structure in their way of life, if you're going to respond to the Lord, you will kneel. It's just a matter of posture for prayer. And we don't see that when they stand at the whaling wall these days, but the average person would kneel as they wait upon the Lord. And it's a man or a prayer for many, many cultures, of course. So the word blessing actually means to kneel and to adore and to speak kindly and respectfully and worshipfully. So I want to talk about the blessing that was on Jacob's life and what that meant.

I want to suggest to you that it said to us that Daddy Isaac loved Esau. And I suggest to you that the reason he did was that Esau was a man's man. He was rough and ready. I would say if sometimes dads wrestled with their sons. My dad never wrestled with me, but I used to tussle with my son by times. It's just kind of a natural thing to get into some kind of a wrestling match. Jacob would have had to take off an apron and draw his hands nicely in order to get into a tussle. I don't see Jacob wanting to do that. Jacob loved to cook. He took after Mama, who was always at his mother's feet. And he learned how to cook, and that comes out in this story as it goes forward. But Esau was a rough and ready guy. His fingernails were probably always dirty. His hands were coarse and rough. He liked razor blades for breakfast. You know, like he was a tough and ready guy. And I'm just suggesting to you that that's probably why Isaac favored his son. It's also possible that the reason that Rebecca favored Jacob would have been just a sensitive mother's heart. That dad was always paying attention to Esau, and poor Jacob was always kind of left out of the mainstream.

So she may have pander to Jacob simply because dad was more taken up with Esau. The problem was that it was very, very obvious, so desperately obvious that Esau was favored by his dad, and Jacob favored by his mother. So really what we had was a dysfunctional family in a number of ways. And it plays out in some very ugly ways. It actually cost Rebecca the relationship with both of her sons. She helped Esau betray Jacob. And when Jacob betrayed his own father and tricked him into bestowing upon him a special blessing, that resulted in Esau being angry, and he was fixing to murder his brother. So Mama had to help her son to escape. Said, you better get out of here. Your brother is only consoling himself with the idea of killing you. And why would he be thinking about it instead of doing it? He was going to wait until daddy Isaac was dead, because Isaac was quite elderly.

So Rebecca was saying to her son, if your dad dies, you'll be dead within another half hour, like your brother is after you. And so he ran for his life, and he became a fugitive. And there's no record. There's no record that Rebecca ever saw Jacob ever alive again, because he became a fugitive. So this little trickery that went on where she was favoring her son over Esau, it really caused a lot of grief. And may I just suggest to you that the grief continued on in another generation. Jacob was a trickster, and he himself suffered some challenges, because he was the father of that great group of boys, one of them being Joseph, and didn't Joseph's brother's trick, and sent him off, sold him off to Egypt. And it was just a continuous series of difficult times, and there's even more to it than that, which we may or may not address some time later. And so I want to get back, though, to the whole concept of blessing. God had spoken to this woman when she besought him. The difficulty that was going on in her womb was two spirits were, in fact, jostling with each other.

There was trouble in there. It wasn't just that they were anxious little children inside there. There was an animosity that was going on, and we wouldn't understand that, particularly. We wonder, well, they weren't thinking it through. No, but there was a spiritual dynamic going on in there. And so that caused her to seek the Lord. And as she sought the Lord, the Lord spoke to her. So the result of the jostling going on inside her womb caused her to seek God's face, and the result of that was that God indicated to her that the covenant that the Lord had made with Abraham, then given over to Isaac, was going to be bestowed upon not the first born who was Esau, but upon Jacob. And that set her up to understand that even though Papa was excited about Esau, she knew in her heart of hearts, what the Lord had told her. I don't doubt that she and Isaac had many chats about this, and he would have just dismissed it and said, this boy is stronger. This guy's a leader. He's a natural born, but I know what I heard from God. And I just believe that Isaac went into a state of denial. We don't have to go down that road a whole lot, but I just want to signify to you that I believe that caused a great deal of grief in that home.

Because realizing in her mind that Jacob was God's favored and that they had no idea how the Lord was going to bless the whole world, but God had said that to Abraham. They didn't understand how it was all going to come about, but they knew that they were children called of God, they knew there was a promise. It was confirmed in their hearts. And so when she became aware of Jacob's calling, I believe that she imparted words of wisdom and spoke into his heart and his life a great deal. God has chosen you. The Lord has told me that.

The Lord has spoken into my heart. When I look back on my own life, it's quite remarkable to me the number of people that God put in my way. There were Sunday school teachers. Sharon Bogas said, as with us here this morning, and I believe it was one of her brothers, if I've got that family line all figured out, the Lord put a teacher in a classroom and I idolized that man. I learned so much. He would share with us as a group of boys. It was an old boys class. They didn't dare put us in with the girls. That would have been an awful mess. And so this man took it upon himself to really minister to us in so many ways. He had a little farm out on the Grand River. He'd have us out there fishing in the Grand and put on hot dogs and whatever.

But it was what he imparted to us in the things of God. He was molding my heart and my life. And he was saying to each one of us, God has a plan for your life. Don't miss it. You know words that are spoken to us, especially when we're young. They're very creative. They're very formative. And I believe that that man had a powerful impact on my life. And I could just go down the line of how many people really inspired me until the point came where my pastor's wife started speaking to my life. And at that point I was an Isaac. I don't want to hear about that. God's called you into the ministry, David. I want absolutely nothing to do with it. But the seeds that she put in me through her words were forming something within me until

I finally cried out all by myself in the prayer room on a Sunday afternoon in that old church in Hamilton. And I said, God, what is it you want of me? It was the seeds that she'd put in my heart. And so many others had put things in my heart. I had a wonderful opportunity recently as I had a phone call come from London saying, your cousin is on his deathbed. Maybe you want to come and see him. Now it's another whole story about the forest clan. But there was not a whole lot of mingling. There was not a whole lot of getting together. And so this cousin of mine, I never heard from him. He never heard from me for a whole lifetime. But it was his daughter who sent word and said, you might want to come. So I jumped in my car.

I went to London. And as the Lord would have it, she just happened to be there at the same time. And we spent some time talking and she said, I've missed so much not having any relationship with a family. And I said, your name is Mary. Yeah. I said, that was our grandmother's name. I know. I said, I was named after Grandma Mary. She said, do you know some things about Mary? Well I was able to open up to her and tell her the impression that grandmother Mary had upon my life. I think I've told you that summer times I would be out visiting in their home. My mom and dad would drop me off. I loved it out there in the little farmhouse.

And the heat for the house was through a series of holes that would be in the ceiling of the kitchen, the living room. Potbelly stoves would be heated up in the winter and the heat would naturally rise up through those holes. But now it's summer time. And of course the potbelly stove is not on. And I remember waking up to the sound of my grandmother's prayers. I told this to my cousin, my cousin, Mary, I told her this a couple of weeks ago, she actually broke down and wept. I said, I heard our grandmother praying for you and me. I told her I would wake up in the morning, every morning that I was out there for the summer time, I would wake up to the sound of my grandmother's prayers.

The grate in the floor was right beside the bed, so I could just roll over on my pillow and look down. I would see my grandmother down there in an old press back chair, praying for the family. I would listen gently as she named every one of her sons. She prayed for Earl, Jack, and Red, and for their wives. Then she started praying for the grandchildren. I'd listen as she said, "and little David upstairs." I heard my grandmother's prayers for me. I want you to know, hearing my grandmother's prayers did something in my spirit. I'm still a byproduct of that prayer spoken in that room back in those days. This lady said, "I want to spend more time with you, David. Can you come back?" She mentioned that her sister up in Kingston is a United Church minister and suggested that I might have lots of things to share with her. So here's the deal.

I'm telling them about how they can watch a service like we're in right now. And they're likely to be watching it this afternoon. And so they're hearing the story right now about Grandmother Forest. And I'm so excited that maybe some words that I'll be able to impart to some of my family members will be some kind of a source of blessing upon them. I'm intrigued, of course, as you're catching on with the whole family life of the Jewish people in their environment and in the way of their ways of life. And you can learn much about the Jewish traditions, their ceremonial ways, or whatever, by still what's going on these days. And so I just got kind of nosy and I started pushing around on the internet and checking some things out. And I discovered, well, there was more to it than that. When we passed through the church in Florida, I got to know a fellow down there quite well from a Presbyterian church.

On one occasion, we had lunch, and he told me the story of how he had already blessed his first son, his oldest son, and how he was planning on blessing his second son. I said, "I've got to hear about this." Well, he said, "It's been something that I've been working on for a couple of years." He said, "kind of like, layer upon layer," he said, "I'm imparting some things to my son." And he said, "the big deal is coming up very, very soon." Now, we had a word for it, and I don't remember. I'm going to just use the word "graduation." But it was a word that had more resonance and more feeling and something more poetic than that. But it was a graduation thing he was going to do with his son. This man was inviting his family. He was inviting his very best friends. He invited his pastor to come to this thing. And his plan was this, that he'd done some things with his son.

He'd take his son kayaking. But it wasn't just going to be out there kayaking in the salt water and whatever, but they would take a lunch or whatever. And then they would kind of pull up on a shore somewhere. And as they're enjoying their lunch, this dad was imparting to his son. He'd say, we're out here for a reason. I want to share another life principle with you. So this daddy had been sharing life principles with his son. He was literally doing an architectural structural thing in the life and the mind of his son. My son was already grown and gone off and got married. And I was thinking, dear Lord, I missed all that. It never occurred to me. And when I asked him about it, he said, well, that's what the Jewish people did. And he said, we can learn a lot from those people, you know. I said, yeah, well, I'm catching on now.

So he invited all of his friends, and they put on a big meal. I don't know all they did, but he was introducing his son and saying, "Today I acknowledge the adulthood of my son." He had made something with his own hands. I forget what it was, but he crafted this thing and bestowed it upon his son. Having heard that story from him, I started going on the internet. I've just heard this word. You've heard this word, right? The bar mitzvah. So I started checking that out. I wish I checked it out a lifetime ago. This is so special. I believe it's because of things they've learned from the Word of God. The Jewish people are very ritualistically inclined.

But when you dig down and you discover the basis and the roots of their ritual, it has some very, very special foundational roots to it. So a bar mitzvah, I find out, is something that a dad always plans from the day of the birth of a son. He plans it for years. And the apex moment of this grooming of his son comes on that boy's either 12th or preferably his 13th birthday. So let's just say probably most of the time is the 13th birthday. So the 13th birthday is not just an ordinary birthday. No. The bar mitzvah birthday and the planning that goes into it can take up to a year, but certainly many, many months. And the process of planning the bar mitzvah is he's getting his son ready for adulthood. And after the bar mitzvah, after they've had a great feast and after they read from the Torah, that's Genesis, that's Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, they read something from the Torah, somebody who would be appointed to be the reader, maybe a rabbi there or whatever. And then if a son is willing and the daddy prompts him, the son will read something out of the prophet. So somebody reads something from the writings of Moses. And now the son for the first time in his life in a public forum, he reads from the word of God. This is such a special privilege for this boy to experience on this his birthday. He's been looking forward to this for the last couple of years. Now we would say, well, you know, a child can read from the Bible. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. When these people read from the word of God, it is the most sacred moment in your life. Every, they read the word of God every day, of course. But when they come together and the reading of the word takes place, it is solemn. Nobody choose dantine in that moment. He brings mints in there.

There was a couple of ladies in our church years ago used to bring mints to shut me and Leslie up. We'd always sit behind her because we knew if we started talking and fussing, she turned around and she said, put that in your mouth and be quiet. We used to actually make a fuss so that all sister flossie would hand us mints. There was a way to go out of it. But you see, if you're in a Jewish synagogue, you don't bring mints. You don't do a thing because the sacred word is being read. His boy has been in the synagogue all of his life. And the reading of the word of God is such a glorious moment. His mind is being formed. The reading of the word of God, the value of the word of God has become such a profound, huge thing in his life. And on his birthday, he gets to read the word of God to all that are there. Another thing that happens at that occasion, maybe you've seen this.

I've seen it on commentaries, on YouTube. I don't know what I do without YouTube. It's my encyclopedia. And maybe you've seen this, but have you seen a Jewish person who's very serious about their religious persuasion? They'll have a leather strap around their arm. Have you noticed that? And if you have, maybe you've also noticed it's not just a leather strap, but there's a little box attached to it. Now that box is a very small compartment, and it can only be made by somebody who's been trained to do so because in that little box is going to be containing a little piece of parchment. And on that parchment, the word of God has been written about God's work with Israel, promises, the Abrahamic promises, and whatever. And so they tie this strap on their arm, especially for high days and days when they're going to come for prayers in the house of the Lord. And if you were to go this morning or any morning of the week to a synagogue, you would see men wearing this strap coming. Then there's another one where they have a strap around their head, and they have another box up here. The box is specially done. You know when they're eating food, it has to be kosher. The crafting of this little box has to be done with the very specific. It's dimensions, the way the wood is handled. Everything about it is absolutely ornate, and it's absolutely perfect. Because you see, it's the Word of God. Why would it be placed on the head? Because the mind mustn't get cluttered with the things of the word. Stay focused. So they put the Word of God as close as they can to their brain.

They tie it onto their arm, and the little box will go right here near to the heart. Thy Word of I hid in my heart that I will not disregard, and I will not sin against you. It's at the bar miffs' fa. That this young lad stands in a very ceremonial manner. Maybe the daddy or maybe the rabbi has been invited to do this, but for the first time in his life, because he's now being declared a man of God. The thing is tied on his arm, and the leather strap is tied to his forehead, and it's declared, today my son is accountable to God. He's been accountable to me. He's done everything that I've told him. But now he's going to correspond to God. He better listen to the Lord. Today he's a man. Today he's accountable to God for his things. Big party.

Big food thing. Cater is command and special dainty foods and whatever. And some kind of a musical outfit will come in, and they get dancing. You've seen how these people dance in circles. I'd love to watch all that. I wouldn't want to have to do it. I'd hurt everybody's feet. I'd be stepping on everybody. I'm a klutz. But I love to watch these kind of things. You know, I, I, I, I, you've seen that kind of stuff. My toes get going when I watch this kind of thing. I love it. So there's dancing, and there's singing, and there's reveling. And this boy is being gently, kindly swarmed by all of these people saying, congratulations, young man of God. We're so proud of you. He's hearing words that are affirming him. He's hearing things that are structuring in his mind. He will never forget the day of his bar mitzvah. It's a glorious day. I believe that in so many ways, this little mama was trying to impart to her son Jacob things with regards to the things of God. Do you realize my son that God made a promise to your grandpa Abraham? God made the same promise to your father Isaac, and he told me he's making the same promise to you. Through you, you must have children. And through, and you're my, you and your brother are my firstborn 20 years, I went up without children, and we worried about that because the family line must carry on. God has a plan.

We don't understand all of it. You see, it was progressive revelation a little bit at a time. They didn't know they were there. They were going Abraham looked for a city whose builder and maker is God. He just headed out. He boarded the bus and there was no signature up on the top as where that bus was going. He was just getting on board because God called him to do so. So Jacob was learning these things. However, however, he learned something from mama that she never should have imparted to him because the day came when Isaac's eyes were getting very dim. He was in fact totally blind. And mama heard him say to his son Esau, go and hunt, kill one of those reindeer or elk or whatever he chased down and get some help and cook it up for me because I love the wild game. And if you'll do that, I'm going to bless you.

He wasn't going to say a magic incantation over him. He wasn't going to say something that he heard from his father or whatever. He was going to believe the Lord was going to put words in his mind and his heart and his mouth. He was going to speak a language that he'd never learned before. God was going to speak through him by the Holy Spirit. And he honestly believed that as he spoke, things would come true in this boy's life. But Rebecca heard it and she ran out quickly and said to Jacob, get ready, get ready, get ready. And while your brother is hunting, I'm going to help you. Your father's blind. And he's always been stupid. So we're going to trick him and you're going to get that blessing. I'm going to take time on another occasion to go into all of that. I want to get back to the concept of the Bar Mitzvah concept, the idea of formative times, the idea of words. And some of you are in this room today. We're so happy that we've got a young couple who haven't had children yet. And we're praying that you'll be fruitful and multiply. That would be exciting to have babies in here interrupting us. And I'd love to smell that in the house. It'd just be so grand. But we're grandparents and we have opportunities to speak into our grandchildren's lives. And what we say to them, it really matters. And what's going on in our school systems right now, it's very, very troubling to me.

The text is mostly correct. Here is the revised version:

Because these are very informative days for a little four-year-olds of five-year-olds and some of the events that are being said to those children by their teachers is in nothing short of disgusting. Do we have any idea? The words that we say are formative.

There are people today who are adults who experience something in their childhood where they were abused and it affected them their entire life. Little girls touched in ways that are diabolical and ungodly. And they go through life carrying the burden of guilt that should never feel guilty. But it leaves them tarnished and troubled. And it's a miracle if they turn out well. April said to me on one occasion after a Sunday morning service, she said, you know, the people gathered at the altar and she felt very drawn to one particular person. A lady whose husband was on the leadership team of the church. And April's story went on that she actually met this lady later in the week. I believe the story is that they went for a drive. This lady wanted to confide in April at the altar she was weeping uncontrollably. I don't know what caused the upheaval in her spirit and the service through what I said. It doesn't matter at this point. But the lady was desperately troubled and we'd never seen this lady in this emotional state. The story goes on that she insisted as I recall that she wanted to be out in kind of a country space like far away from everything and everybody. It was almost like nobody must see us. Nobody must hear us. It was that kind of an idea. We've got to talk. What she shared with my wife was how something was imposed upon her when she was quite young. She was carrying guilt. She was carrying shame. And the question that she posed to April was, I always wonder what did I do to cause someone to think that I wanted or that I longed for.

So it's not just words that are spoken but it's actions. It's actions. And we must be ever so careful but what we say to our children, to our grandchildren and to one another as well. Because a few words dropped are like a pillow, a feathery pillow. You've heard the little folklore concept. Break a pillow in the wind and scatter the feathers. Then try to gather up the feathers and put it back together again. It's an impossibility. Words are like that. A firm of words, encouraging words build confidence and strength but negative words. Words like we're spoken to a little boy in a classroom down in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. A woman came to a pastor's house. I know the pastor personally. She came totally distraught. Trying weeping, angry, what is your problem? My son came home from school. He's just a little fellow.

I don't know the age. This just happened a few months ago. Came home. He was acting distraught. He was not cooperative. He just wasn't himself. There was something troubling the little fellow's emotions. So the mother very carefully sat down with him and comforted him in some way, shape, or form and said, what's going on? What's troubling you? And the little fellow said, I don't want to be a girl. And he broke into tears. The kid was wasted. I don't want to be a girl. I don't want to be a girl.

And she said, oh my goodness, my good luck. No, you're a little boy. She's trying to find a lot. He said, The little boy says to his mother. He said, I have to be a girl from now on. And I don't want to be a girl. I don't want. And he's crying profusely. So the mother digs down deeper and says, well, why did the teacher say, I don't know why she said that. So she gets the story out. The teacher passes out crayons to the children and gives them a piece of paper and says I want you to use only one crayon and I want you to draw anything that you want on that piece of paper. Just choose crayon a box of brand new crayons. You choose whatever crayon you want. The little boy's story was this. Then he pulled a crayon out of the box and he's a simple little normal child. He's obedient. He started drawing a picture. And upon thare lady, I guess was a lady we don't know anymore, do we?

I guess it was a lady. That's the story that came to me, came to him and said, oh, so you chose a purple crayon. Yeah?

Why did you choose the purple crayon? I don't know. You like purple? Yeah? Is it your favorite crayon? Now when you ask a little child whose mind is forming, if that child looks up to that teacher as some kind of an icon, guess how that child will respond to such a question. Is that your favorite? What's the right answer? So he'll give what he thinks she wants to hear, right? Is that your favorite? Yeah, I guess so. Ha ha! So you chose a purple crayon. It's your favorite. She takes the questions that she asks him and she puts it back now into a narrative and she said, so now we all know this is a girl. That teacher's a predator. It's against the law now for the parent to try and talk the child to go the other way. We are not allowed in this country now to help the child formulate what's morally pure, what's good, what's bad.

We're not allowed to do so anymore. Our freedom that our men's soldiers, our fathers, fought four years ago is being ripped away. And what's going to become of a whole generation of children who are filled with questions that no answers, no real answers is just a boy or a girl, all we don't know yet. We don't know yet. Does anybody have any idea what happens in a child's mind? I'll tell you something that happened in my mind. I attended a school. I wrestled with this. I wrestled with this whole thing. Well I tell you, by the way, I could get arrested for what I said just said to the last few minutes. That's how our freedom's. . . I could get arrested for what I'm saying here today. Go ahead, make my day. I've lived long enough. I'm 79 years of age. I'm not a child. I wasn't born yesterday. I've seen I'm a passer. I've seen the pathetic state when people mess with children's minds. I've seen the outcome. It's diabolical. Pastor, I didn't come to hear you ranting, raving, carrying on like that. When it's shinnily getting greedy. Grade three, a school called the Mohawk Trail. It's like me.

Well, I'm almost there. It doesn't exist anymore. The school is so old. They tore it down. They didn't even mothball it. They just got rid of it. So a teacher who was a rather large person to me, taller than my mom, tall, stately person, a person that I feared. I can't explain to you why I feared her, but maybe you'll understand a little more in the next 10 seconds. I just feared her something fierce. It caused she had a countenance and eyes that would look through you. And I remember distinctly her asking me a question. I don't remember the question. I was so, I was so jarred and shaken in that moment that everything else about what was



asked and what was my answer, it's all gone. It was all wiped clean when she said to me, that's a stupid answer" to "Change "Why should I be surprised, David? You're a stupid person and you'll never amount to anything." Grade three, I struggle with that all in my life." You'll never amount to anything. I had trouble, I had trouble on focusing on what do you want to be when you grow up. I to "So the mother very carefully sat down with him, comforted him in some way, shape, or form, and said, 'had this black cloud over my head, you're stupid and you'll never amount to anything. to "Children, their little minds are so formative, so formative, so not yet set, not yet gelled in process. The Jews had it right."

Overall, the text is well-written and conveys the message effectively. They knew how to train their children. They had verses that the Lord had given them. Train up a child the way he should go. And when he's an adult and he's matured, that which he told him will keep him going on the straight and narrow. He won't wander away from it. You say, Pastor, I have a son that's not acting that out. Trust God, he's not done with him yet. He's not done with that child yet. Our words will shape our children. So it doesn't matter what year it was, but I was pastoring a church in London and I got a phone call from a person that lived in a town called Shakespeare. That's north of London somewhere. Are you Pastor David?" Yes, I am. I've heard about you and I just felt prompted that maybe you're the person that might be helpful. I said, I'll do what I can. Well, there's a young woman that's in your city and she's a nurse and she works at the St. Joseph's Hospital. I knew the hospital well. She said, I'm going to use the word Linda. It's close to her real name. I'll just use Linda. She said, Linda comes from a very distraught 1, very dysfunctional. She said, I don't know anything about her mother, but I know her father is a ruthless tyrant, a bully.

And she said, it's so troubling when you really get to know Linda and you get to find out what's really in her heart. She said, she's a slasher. She takes razor blades and slashes her wrists. She's made several attempts to really do it right and take her own life. And yet she feels that she's got a special place in the hospital. She's a nurse, but she's tormented in her own spirit. And she said, I would lay that at the feet of her own father. I said, I think you want to tell me about it. Yeah, from the day that Linda was born, the dad was fussed. Who am I going to leave this farm to? I wanted a son. And that Linda's earliest recollection, she continuously got put down. Come on, little girl. Come on, little girl. Force her out to the barn, to do the chores and whatever. Well lots of girls have been raised on the farm and they love the farm. When they have a dad who's a wonderful fellow and a supportive mother, they love to help that out and do the chores. They're proud of themselves what they can do out there. They long to keep up with their dad because their dad speak kind and wonderful thing.

But this dad put her down. If you were a man, you could pick that up. You'll pick up that bale. Those bales, those square bales would weigh 60 and more pounds depending on how dry they were, depending on how the weather had been. Could they leave it out in the field long enough to get dry enough? It would literally lose weight. But if you were in a hurry to get it off the fields because cloudy wet weather was on the way, you had to get it off. It would start to go moldy, get it off the ground, get it moving. And so the bales would be incredibly heavy. And so this Linda was tormented. Pick it up like a man. She dressed like a man. She never dressed like a lady.

She dressed like a man. Of course, that's anti-political now. You can't say dresses like a man, dresses like a lady. That's all gone. They're trying to convince me my mother was not a woman. My father was not a man. I'm not an uncle because there's no such thing as a niece. Like it's all mixed up. That's all mixed up. When we met her, I met her. I actually, boldly, went to the hospital and talked to somebody in the nursing department where they organized the nurses. And I said, I'm looking for Linda. And I said, I've been encouraged to do so. I'm a pastor.

I hope you'll trust me with this. I have no idea what she looks like. And this lady was very, very careful. She said, well, I can't do much about this. She said, I'm not going to point her out to you. She said, that would be against all reasons, she said. But I'll tell you, knowing where she today on what floor, where she, fussing, I know she'll be coming out the front door. The only thing I'll tell you is her hair is very dark. And she's got a large frame. She's not a small person. It's all I knew. I parked my car and I stood across the street praying up a storm. Dear Jesus, help me in pick the right one. All I had to do was pick the wrong one and I'd get a 50-pound purse over the side of my head. There you go, my word. It was a . . . But all of a sudden I saw somebody coming and I thought, that's her? And then she came across the street. I just quietly called out her name and she turned and she looked and I smiled and I said, I'm Pastor David. That meant nothing to her. But it stopped her in her tracks. How did I know her name? Just two blocks away was a little diner. I said, let's go. Let's sit in that diner and let's have a cup of coffee.

There's something I need to tell you. That was strange to her, but for some reason she trusted me. And doing such a thing, by the way, is against all rules of what pastors do. We don't meet with women and restaurants. But sometimes you do what you got to do. And she said, what is it that you've come to tell me? And knowing her background now, knowing the story that the lady from that little town Shakespeare had told me, I said, I've come to tell you that Jesus loves you just the way you are. That you're not a mistake. That he loves you and he wants to be who you feel you really are. And by the way, through Jesus, I love you today. In the restaurant, at that point, only those couple of phrases, Linda, broke down and wept like a five-year-old. Put her head down and cried.

Got the tissues supplied by the restaurant and was mopping her eyes and her face. She said, don't say that. Please don't say that. I said, well, it's the truth. What's wrong? She said, I don't want to believe it. Why don't you want to believe it? Because nobody loves me. Why would you love me? You don't know anything about me. And I just kept on pressing through. I said, it's all about Jesus. It's Jesus in me that loves you. I said, I don't know enough about Jesus. I don't know enough about you to like you or dislike.

I said, God sent me to tell you this. It's a long story. I led her to the Lord that very afternoon, standing out in the parking lot between a couple of cars. She gave her life to Jesus. She needed to hear, you're okay. I didn't want to betray the lady who called. I didn't want to betray the story. I didn't want to go down that line, but I had enough information that I was able to kind of work around the train on. And I was able to kind of minister to her. She got water baptized in the church. She joined all the young adults. Her life was really changing, but April and I both had the same idea on the same day. It was a startling moment at the end of the second Sunday morning service I sat on the front pew. April came and found me and she said, are we ready to go? I said, not until I tell you something. I said, if you think this is weird or strange, just say so. I said, I think God has told me that we're to do something. But only if you would agree, what would that be? I said, I think that God has some more things yet for Linda to experience. She's never been part of a healthy home. She's never known what it was to be at a table where everybody was loving and caring. Our table is like that with our kids. I want to know if you're willing to have Linda move in with us, free. We don't charge her any room and board, nothing. When she stayed with us, she stays with us. In my mind, she stays with us until she's ready to move along. April said, I was going to talk to you about that very thing.

It was an incredible moment. It was an incredible moment when we're thinking the same thing that God gave us the prompt. We went together to speak with her and said, we want you to move in the next 48 hours, 24 hours, whatever it was. Pack up your gear and come. Why are you doing this? I said, you know, you know. She moved in. She became a big sister to our girls. She became part of our family. We didn't do anything without Linda. That April took her shopping. No, this girl didn't even know how to dress because you see her mother was never allowed to treat her like a woman. She had to wear cover all jeans and army boots.

And so April had took her somewhere and got her hair all done, spiffy. And she took her to a dress shop and you know what goes on in the dress shop. Oh, it's you. Oh, it's you. Oh, it's wonderful. And so I'm sitting in my little home office. April gathers the children together and I hear a little rap on the door of my office. I said, you know, come on in. And in comes April and Linda and our three kids. And this lady standing there like she just came off the catwalk of some outfit in Paris. And you can just tell like she's glowing from ear to ear. The first time in her life, she's been told you're a lady. You know, these boots were made for walking. Like she was all of a sudden she had words that were being poured into her life and the words.

But more than the words, how we, how we coddled, how we panned it over her and how we told her. God is a plan for you. He wants you to know that you're normal. She joined our family was a part of it and then they came when she said, I think it's time for me to move along. We said, that's fine. We stay as long as you want. No, I think it's time to move along. Some guy took an interest in her. I think we left town before that all. I think before it was all finished. She married. And she lives up country there somewhere north of London. Words. Words. I'll finish with this one on my time shot, but I'll tell you this one anyhow. First Samuel chapter one, Hannah is a woman who also is barren. It's quite interesting how many stories there are in the word where a woman is barren and they asked upon the Lord and the Lord supplies a child. Sarah was one, you know. Elizabeth, right? Who became the mama of John the Beth. It's quite interesting.

The text provided contains several spelling and grammar errors. Here is the corrected version:

So if one of you senior ladies haven't had a child yet. We did a campaign in that church in London, by the way. I just thought it was the right thing to do. I went a"nd got it all printed off. We made up these big round seals that were sticky on the back. Put it on your door post. Put it on your bumper, whatever. And it said, ""it just said, glad tidings grow with us. Remember a lady came up to me and she said, I hate that thing. I hate it." I said, why? She said, it happened to several women in the church and she said, I should have listened. She said, everybody's putting that sticker on there. She said, they're getting pregnant. She said, I got enough kids. Grow with us. Words. And it was lacking. She wanted a child. And you know the story as well as I do. But just pick up on this little piece."

When the time came for the child to be weaned, she kept the promise she made to the Lord. She said to her husband, Elkhana was his name. I have to take little Sammy to the temple until they went at a specific time of the year, at a feast time. And she went to the priest who knew her, he had to have remembered the time when he spoke to her and spoke a prophetic word, a prophetic word over her, which that prophetic word did something marvelous in her person. And so she said, well, this is the, this is the fruit. This is, and so I'm giving him to you to serve the Lord in the house of the Lord. And it says from that day on, he wore a little ephod. Now the ephod was a linen garment that was for priests. And then a little ephod was made for him because he's going to be a, you're going to be a priest someday. And so they dressed him in the ephod, a priestly garment. And then every year she would spend the year making a beautiful robe.

And without a doubt she would do it all up fancy and whatever. Hopefully no pink. She would do it all up fancy for the little fellow. Seeing a little guy would look and anticipate every year that the feast time was coming, my mama is coming. And she'd bring him a little robe, one that was bigger than last year. He's growing, of course. And I can hear her say, there he is, mama's little man of God. I believe that she would have said that to him. And he turned out to be a powerful, powerful judge and prophet. He was the one who anointed Saul and then he was the one that anointed David to be king of Israel. Mama's little man of God. Formative words are a source of blessing. There's a source of blessing, when we bless each other with our kindness, when we say,

God bless you, it's not just a saying like, have a nice day. When you say the words, God bless you, the weight of that is like gravity itself. It's not just frivolous talk. It has weight. And you can expand on that and speak to people and say, it's always good to see you in the house, Lord. When I see you, you just your presence, just your being. You don't have to do anything. Just when I see you, it makes a difference in my life. Everything that we do has an impact on somebody's life. It affirms or it's dark and it hurts. Be careful little mama with what you say. Be careful how you function. Your life, including your words, makes a difference. Heavenly Father, help every one of us to be careful of our words and to realize that out

of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks and that, Lord, we are children of the Lord, we're anointed of the Holy Spirit and that if we're very, very careful with our words, not overly abundant, not overly gooey, not not overly stating, but out of a generous heart of love and spiritual maturity that we speak words of affirmation and love and kindness and support one to another. Lord, help us also to be affirmative to our neighbors and the people around us. Lord, I want to be known as the fellow in my neighborhood that when somebody says, yeah, I met him. He's a likeable guy. Dear Jesus, I want to be that man. I want to be that man. Help me to be that man.

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Help all of us to be that man, that woman that wherever we go, we bring sunshine. We're like spring flowers, always blooming. Help us to be that man.  
In Jesus name, I pray, amen.