

December 27/28, 2003

## Study Questions

*Fear or Faith: A Study in the Life of Isaac & Jacob*

### Why Faith Matters

Genesis 35:1-29

Pastor Bryan Clark

#### Opening Discussion

1. What do people in our culture use to try to determine their value or worth?
2. Go back 20 years and try to remember what things were most important to you at that time. Now, looking back, were those things the right things? Why or why not?
3. What matters most in this life? Are you living consistent with your answer?

#### Bible Study

1. Read Genesis 35:1-29
2. In 35:1 God reminds Jacob of their meeting in chapter 28. God promised His presence would be with Jacob wherever he went. In 35:3 Jacob affirms God's faithfulness to keep His promises. Review all the ways God has been faithful to keep His promises to Jacob from chapters 28-34.
3. In chapter 28 Jacob vowed that if God would be faithful, he would do what?  
  
Has he kept that vow?  
  
How does his statement in 35:2,3 line up with his vow?
4. What would (does) it mean for you to say with Jacob, "The LORD will be my God?"  
  
What would it mean to put away foreign gods, purify yourself, and change clothes?
5. What is the point of the three death scenes in this chapter?  
  
How does this inform our view of what matters in life?  
  
Have you ever had a near death experience? If so, how did that experience affect your view of what matters in life?
6. What is the purpose of 35:22 in the text?  
  
Does life just fall into place when we finally surrender and put God first? Why or why not?

## **Application**

1. What would be necessary for you to say, “The LORD will be my God,” this coming year?

Are there any foreign gods that need to be put away?

Is there a need to “change clothes” or “purify yourself” to come “home” to God’s presence this year?

2. As a group, brainstorm ways to keep your focus on the things that matter in the upcoming year. Have each individual then choose 3 very specific things that will help keep him/her focused on the right things this year.
3. Pray for one another. Pray that we might all realize what really matters and live for God in the upcoming year.