

Russell Kelfer

Jacob & Essau: Let's Make a Deal

709-B

Series: God's Living Legends (Part 1)

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.
INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org

Let's Make a Deal

What a competitive world we live in. Everyone is vying for something. Winning isn't just essential; it's everything. Businesses no longer cling to high moral standards in order to protect their reputation. If compromise means more sales, then the end seems to justify the means. Advertising no longer seems bound by the constraints of truth; the name of the game is promise whatever it takes, worry later about whether or not you can deliver on those promises.

Politicians and nations no longer stand on principle. Everything is up for grabs at the bargaining table. Even in sports, loyalty to a team, a city, or a player means nothing. If it doesn't produce, sell it. If he doesn't have a good year, trade him. Life is all a trade and it's all centered around self. If you don't believe it, watch families as they vie for what's left behind when some dear loved one departs.

Life seems to have progressively succumbed to what was once called a "used car mentality". We actually long to be promised something, even if we know we won't get it. But the problem is not new. People have been bargaining away their souls for a mess of pottage for generations. It is simply mushrooming as the latter days unfold. Today's lesson is the classic illustration of man's greed, even as it invades the family.

So we continue our journey though God's Living Legends, the men and women whose lives are captured in Scripture for our admonition that we might learn from them. One of our studies centered around Abraham's beloved son, Isaac. We looked as he journeyed up to the mountaintop of sacrifice with his dad and asked, "But where's the lamb?" Two lessons ago, we watched as God called out a bride for Isaac and painted for us a portrait of His bride, the church.

Our last study looked at Isaac and his bride Rebekah as they waited twenty long years for God to unlock the womb for a child

Let's Make a Deal

to be born. At last, answered prayer. At the age of sixty, Isaac was to become a father. The perfect dream, however, turned into a nightmare as Rebekah, carrying two children instead of one, sensed great conflict. She experienced fear as the children struggled together in her womb. These boys were the answer to her prayer, but it was not turning out the way she had planned. In desperation, she went to inquire of the Lord, "If it be so, then why?"

We learned that God's heart does not long for us to pray, "Give us children, Lord, provided they be normal. Give us children, Lord, provided they be healthy. Give us children, Lord, provided they be stable. Give us children, Lord, provided they will not rebel or embarrass us or embarrass You. Provided that they be safe. Provided that they be this or that." "Lord, I will be a parent if..." We learned that God, the perfect parent, has been the father of Adam, the original rebel, and of millions of us as well. He has wept clouds of tears through the ages over the rebellious and stiff-necked generations of children. Yet knowing this, He willingly became our Father. You and I have a free will as our children do. They have a choice to obey. They have a choice to rebel as we do. Our responsibility is to train them and love them and teach them. Their choice is to respond or rebel. Our accountability is for our choices. Their responsibility is for theirs. Rebekah had to learn that the hard way.

We closed the last lesson by listening to Paul as he answered Rebekah's complaint in Romans 9. He wept over God's children, the Jews. They had missed the Messiah and rebelled against their Father. Paul said,

But it is not as though the word of God has failed.

(Romans 9:6)

What if God...

...that He might make known the riches of His glory...

(from Romans 9:22,23 NAS)

What if God, knowing our heartaches and our disappointments and our children's errors, wanting to make known the riches of His glory, chose to use even those disappointments for His glory and for our good? Paul gave us the perfect illustration of that truth. He said: "Look at Rebekah. When Jacob and Esau were still in her womb, didn't God have a plan? A plan to use even their conflict?" He said in Genesis 25,

Let's Make a Deal

And the LORD said to her, [Rebekah] “Two nations are in your womb; And two peoples shall be separated from your body; and one people shall be stronger than the other; And the older shall serve the younger.” (Genesis 25:23 NAS)

We left a comforted, yet still confused, Rebekah as they wheeled her into the delivery room and she became the mother of twin boys. Verse 25 tells us that the first came out all red like a hairy garment and they named him Esau. Afterwards, his brother came forth with his hand holding onto Esau's heel, so they named him Jacob. It is there that we take up our story for this lesson. This lesson is entitled, “Let's Make A Deal”, It is found in Genesis 25:27-34. The main characters are Jacob and Esau, Rebekah's twins.

As we begin, once again we have in Scripture one of those one-liners that span a multitude of experiences. Verse 27 simply starts like this:

When the boys grew up, (Genesis 25:27a NAS)

TWO DIFFERENT BOYS

We don't have a lot of insight into what that childhood was like, except the insights we can glean in the verses to follow about how they turned out. How many a mother, how many a father, could fill volumes of books with the happenings those five words encompass. *When the boys grew up*. The nights Rebekah walked the floor as one child burned with fever. The tears Rebekah shed as the hostilities and the deceit grew between the two boys. “He did it, Mom, it was Esau's fault!” “No, not me, I wasn't near it, Jacob did it!” Have you ever heard that? Only the names are changed to protect the guilty. The joys of their first steps. The tears of their first fight. The agony of their first nights away from home.

Think about it, parents. How many events in your life have been controlled or affected by your children? To a degree, for a time at least, they become our life. Our every thought seems to revolve around their needs. Life takes on a whole new adjustment when that time is over.

When the boys grew up. They were different. That is the literal meaning of verse 27. It says this:

Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a peaceful man, living in tents. (NAS)

Let's Make a Deal

We already know from verse 26 that identical twins they were not. Their teachers didn't need name tags to identify them. They rather needed a letter from home assuring them that they really were twins. They didn't look a thing alike. One was a hairy, masculine redhead who no doubt looked like his daddy. The other was probably more slight of build, perhaps more with his mother's features and temperament. It didn't make him any less of a man, except perhaps in his father's eyes. They looked decidedly different.

Not only were their looks different, their likes were different; so their lives were different. Esau was a man's man. He was probably first-string fullback at Gerar High. When he flashed his hairy arms, half the pep squad fell over in a faint. Papa Isaac ate it up. Esau, like his dad perhaps, was a skillful hunter, one of only two such named in Scripture, a man of the field. This phrase means more than just an exclamation mark to his hunting abilities. It means his personality was unbridled. He was like a wild donkey who roamed the pastures. He did what he wanted, when he wanted. He was the Mean Joe Green of Isaac's age.

Now contrast that with Jacob. He was a peaceful man in contrast to an unbridled one. He stayed close to home. Outwardly, he obeyed and submitted. The King James Version says that *he was a plain man, morally upright in overt behavior*. But he was a phony. His name means "supplanter, cheater, deceiver". On the surface, Mr. Goody Two-Shoes, but underneath, he was Al Capone. To the world, he was rated "G" for gentle. In his heart, he was rated "R" for ruthless. The phrase, *living in tents*, meant that he stayed at home, pleased his mom, picked up his socks, greeted the guests, combed his hair, learned his memory verses. He did it all right. He went through all the motions.

You may say, "What a problem to have two such different children." No, what a blessing. Have you ever considered the dynamic of diversity? The divine design that makes no two people exactly alike? Study nature. Ask yourself, "Why didn't God make all the trees palm trees, or oak trees? It would have simplified His design. Why aren't all bugs, beetles? Or mosquitoes? Why aren't all snakes, cobras? Or all fish, redfish? Or to be more specific, why aren't all the snowflakes alike?" I know and you know that each has a particular place in God's eternal design and a particular function as well. An omnipotent God demonstrates His majesty through the diversity of His creation. Isn't that what

Let's Make a Deal

His creation is for?

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament
shows His handiwork. (Psalm 19:1 NKJV)

Why are the characters in Scripture so different? Why are two brothers from the same womb so distinctly unique? I know and you know that God has a plan *that He might make known the riches of His grace*. What about the prophets? Each one was unique. Each one was distinct in personality and calling. What about the disciples? Have you ever known twelve more different men? Why not twelve apostle Johns? There would not have been any contention. Why not twelve Matthews? What a mess that would be. There would not be four gospels to have emerged with all the facets of the diamond of Scripture.

What about the church as a whole? Why are there different spiritual gifts? Why the different ministries? Why the different emphases? What about the local body? Why not spiritual clones? Why is it that no two of us have the exact same life message? No two of us were converted in the same second in the same way? No two of us look alike, act alike, respond alike, though we are infused with the same Spirit? Why? The dynamic of diversity.

Diversity need not bring disharmony, but rather unity. Your strengths offset my weaknesses. The same is true of marriage. God only intended the male-female relationship in marriage. He deplores all else. You and your spouse are not the same, physically, emotionally, mentally. You are distinctly, divinely different. The dynamic of diversity, by design, is God's plan.

If we know this, then why do we expect our children to all turn out the same? Why do we expect them to be like us, or like each other? Hasn't God given each family through the children's personalities, the diversity that family needs to develop its message? Oh, how late in life we learn the spiritual significance of the dynamic of diversity. Many of us never learn. Isaac and Rebekah were just like us. The passage continues:

Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game; but
Rebekah loved Jacob. (Genesis 25:28 NAS)

TWO PARTIAL PARENTS

Isaac accepted Esau as his favorite son because he and Daddy liked the same things. In other words, Daddy was so enamored with what he saw in the mirror that he could only identify with

Let's Make a Deal

a son who was just like himself. Let me ask you, former “Big Man on Campus”, what kind of pressure, subtle or overt, do you put on your son to be the kind of athlete you remember yourself to be? What kind of role model do we hold up for our children? Do you tell your son, “All I want you to be is a godly son,” but all you talk about is his brother’s athletic accomplishments, or yours, or those on the television screen? What if God didn’t call him or equip him to be a fullback? Does he assume himself to be any less of a man in your sight? Our daughters. We confuse them, too. We say we love them for their inner beauty, but all we compliment them on or compliment others on, is, “Oh, how pretty your hair looks.” The Miss America mystique. Why? We want them to be what we never were or we thought we were or what we wished we were. We all do it to some degree.

Isaac loved Esau because he had a taste for wild game. In other words, he did not love Jacob because he did not have the same taste. Now we don’t know why Rebekah loved Jacob so, but maybe it was to offset Isaac’s favoritism. That is what often happens. Maybe he was a “momma’s boy”. We know he liked to cook. But if her reason for partiality was no better than her husband’s, it could have been because of something dynamic like the fact that he liked string beans. Oh, the danger of partial parents.

James Dobson in his book, The Strong-Willed Child, makes this observation about pitting one child against the other. He lists three suggestions as cures for sibling rivalries in the home.

The first suggestion is: Don’t inflame the natural jealousy of children. Sibling rivalry is not new. It was responsible for the first murder. It has been represented in nearly every two-child family from that time until this. The underlying source of this conflict is old-fashioned jealousy and competition. He quotes a famous author on the subject: “It was once believed that if parents would explain to a child that he was having a little brother or sister, not to resent it, because he was being told they were enjoying him so much that they wanted to have another one just to increase their happiness.” But that story doesn’t work, Dobson says. Can you imagine going to your wife, saying, “You have brought me so much happiness that I’m going to bring in another wife so that we can all be happier.” She wouldn’t buy it and neither do the children. He goes on to say to avoid the circumstances that compare them unfavorably with one another. “A boy does not

Let's Make a Deal

care how tall he is, he is vitally interested in *who is the tallest*. Each child systematically measures himself against his peers and is tremendously sensitive to failure particularly within his family," Dobson says. He adds that there are three areas in which parents should never compare their children.

1. *Physical attractiveness*. If Sharon, for instance, hears you say, "Betty is going to be a gorgeous girl," the very fact that her name was not mentioned automatically establishes a rivalry and causes her to assume that she is ugly. Beauty is the most significant factor in self-esteem in western civilization.

2. *The child's intelligence*. Never compare how smart one is to another because everyone is different.

3. *The child's athletic ability*. This area is also so diverse that it is unfair to compare one against another.

Dobson's second suggestion is: "Establish a workable system of justice." Have reasonable laws which are enforced fairly for each member. An example is that no child ever is allowed to destructively make fun of the other.

His last suggestion is: Recognize the hidden target of it all. The children want their parents' attention. Some children would rather be wanted for murder than not to be wanted at all. He tells about two boys beating on each other, stopping only to turn to their dad and say, "Is anyone going to stop us before we get hurt?" Rivalry.

TWO BIG MISTAKES

Rebekah, it seems, had lost her copy of Dobson's book. You see the picture now emerging in Isaac's house: two decidedly partial parents and two distinctly different boys and a great spirit of jealousy between them. Now let's watch their lives develop and see the plan of God unfold even through their rebellion and rejection and their two "big mistakes". Verse 29 tells us of a little incident that affected the course of history. I don't know about you, but I think we seldom realize, at the time, the shock wave-like repercussions of our behavior on other people. No doubt the two characters in this story, Jacob and Esau, thought this was just another incident. They thought that what they were doing was just between the two of them. It never is. It affected their parents, their children, the course of nations, and history. The story goes like this:

Let's Make a Deal

Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished.

He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" (That is why he was also called Edom.)

Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright."

"Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?"

But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.

Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright. (Genesis 25:29-34 NIV)

Now the item in question was Esau's birthright, the rights that went by birth to the father's firstborn son. Though Esau despised it or took it lightly, we mustn't overlook its value. Look what he was trading for a bowl of lentil soup. Look at the value of a birthright:

- 1- In the absence of the father, the firstborn son, who had the birthright, had the authority over his brothers and sisters. (Genesis 24:55,60)
- 2- The firstborn ranked highest only under his father.
- 3- He inherited twice as much as every other son. (II Kings 2:9)
- 4- Among kings, it meant automatic succession to the throne. (II Chronicles 21:1-3)
- 5- They were often given first choice in marriage. (I Samuel 18, Genesis 29)
- 6- Because of the Passover, the firstborn was later to be considered holy to the Lord. (Exodus 13:2,13)

Remember also the *spiritual* significance of the firstborn where Christ was concerned.

1- Jesus was the firstborn of his mother, (Matthew 1:25) and it was recorded that his parents did for him after the custom of the law for firstborn sons. (Luke 2:27).

2- Christ is also the firstborn of His heavenly Father and has first rank among His brethren and total authority over them. (Romans 8:29, Hebrews 1:6)

Let's Make a Deal

3- By His resurrection, Christ is now called the firstborn from among the dead, (Colossians 1:18, Revelation 1:5.) He is the firstborn of every creature, (Colossians 1:16)

4- Believers now found in Christ and appropriating His birthright are called the firstborn of God, (Hebrews 12:23) because we are privileged above other men.

So what was at stake in this transaction was the headship of the family, the monetary gain of a double inheritance, the spiritual leadership of his people, the right to be in the lineage of the Messiah, and the respect of both family and outsiders that accompany such rank. How is that for an even exchange for a bowl of stew? That's got to be the highest priced bowl of oriental chili ever brewed.

Now let's look more carefully at the incident itself. Esau, the skilled hunter, the apple of daddy's eye, had been on one of his happy hunting trips. He returned apparently empty-handed, but totally exhausted and famished. Even a hamburger that came from some place other than the golden arches would have tasted good to him. He comes home fatigued, looking for an icebox to raid. As he passes brother Jake's tent, he catches the aroma of a pot of lentil stew and he becomes putty in his brother's hands. "Hey, brother Jake, how about some of that red stuff, I'm famished!" Verse thirty tells us that from that day to this he was nicknamed "Red". Esau has come to Jacob in his most vulnerable position. The way to his heart was through his stomach, and his stomach was empty.

Enter Jacob, one of the original wheeler-dealers. "Tell you what I'm a gonna do," he says, "Such a deal I've got for you. One little birthright for one bowl of stew." So Esau begins to rationalize, "Behold, I'm about to die, so what use then is the birthright to me?" He had the "there's no tomorrow philosophy." This is the prevalent underlying foundation of today's generation and of every generation to some degree. Eat, drink and be merry, tomorrow we may die. "Thou fool!" the Scripture says. "Thou fool!" The "I'll take the short road philosophy. Give me mine today." To the prodigal son, this made sense. "I may not live until Dad dies, I will take mine now and do my thing." So he took it all but it did not last at all. It never does. He was not about to die. He rationalized his way to what he wanted.

Have you ever said, "I'll die if I have to stay in this marriage"?

Let's Make a Deal

So you walked out on the will of God. Have you ever said, "I'll die if I can't get that job, so I'll lie a little on the application." Have you ever said, "I'll die if I can't marry her, even though she is not a Christian." So you compromise God's Scriptural standards. Have you ever said, "I'll die if I don't get that car, so I'll go into financial bondage." Have you ever said, "I'll die if they don't accept me". So you sell out to the crowd for a bowl of stew. "I'll die if I don't see that game." So we run from church to sit in front of the television and watch 22 men beat each other's brains out. "I'll die if I have to give my testimony." So you never share the very thing worth sharing. "I'll die if I don't eat." So "what's the difference", Esau rationalized, as if Rebekah wouldn't feed him. As if he couldn't still have shot an animal and provided for himself.

Esau was a stupid fool. He sold his right to spiritual leadership for a serving of soup. The here and now he could see, the then by faith he couldn't. The physical he could taste, the spiritual he couldn't. So Esau was a fool. Jacob was no better. He was a self-serving deceiver. "Let's make a deal," he comes back with, "You want a bowl of stew? I've got one. I want the birthright. You have the birthright. Let's make a deal. I want the deal in writing, dear brother, or it is no stew for you."

Jacob is the pious, religious hypocrite who thinks the end justifies the means. He is the older brother who stayed home in the prodigal son story. No doubt his mother told him that some day he would rule over his brother, Esau. From what we will see of her in the next lesson, she would heartily have endorsed his course of action. So what if you ruin another's life. So what if you have to lie or cheat a little. You would be in the will of God. God would understand. God understands, all right. He understands that you defrauded Him of the right to do it His way.

Not only do you soil your reputation, but His as well. So Esau went for the quick thrill. Jacob went for the throat. The birthright was exchanged. "God would have done that anyway," Jacob may have surmised. How this transaction must have broken the heart of God.

It may be at this point in our story Rebekah was cursing the day she ever had children. We don't know. We *do* know that if she had just relaxed, she would have seen that even amidst the carnal conniving of her rebellious sons, the plan of a sovereign God was right on time.

TWO THINGS TO REMEMBER

In closing, we need to look at the two lessons we need to learn about life from Jacob and Esau, lessons projected again on the screen of Scripture in Matthew 4, where Jesus and Satan are eye to eye. I believe there is something special about three passages of Scripture. I believe that all of Scripture is special, but I believe that Genesis 3, Job 1 and 2 and Matthew 4 require special attention. Their applications can be made again and again and again in the marketplace of life. You may wonder why that is so. Here is what is so special about those three passages: These are the places where we see Satan and man, or Satan and God, face to face. This is where we see Satan as he really is. We see his plan, his purposes, and his perversion of the truth. While he is wise, it is true, his tactics are unbelievably stale. His methods are devious, but repetitious. There are a limited number of things he can do, so he does them again and again and again.

His lies follow an exact pattern though he changes the wording slightly just to confuse us. Look at the lies he sold Jacob and Esau and look at the lies he tried on Jesus. First, he waited forty days while Jesus fasted until He was so weak He could barely walk, just like Esau. With snake-like timing Satan says, "I see you're hungry. Let's make a deal. Just command these stones to turn to bread. Just think, 'I'll die anyway.'" so misuse the very thing God gave You to save Your people, Your birthright, Your supernatural power. What is important is now." These are the little bargains Satan sells us in his Five and Dime at Last Gap Gulch. He leads you to believe it is a losing proposition anyway: your marriage, your job, your testimony, your reputation, your finances. "Misuse the power of God, sell out and bail out," he whispers. He has a store full of goodies that glitter like diamonds; but once you've bought, like Eve did, you find out you've bought a hoax. The apple is rotten and the stew is bitter, so don't listen to him.

But Jesus answered and said, "IT IS WRITTEN 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'" (Matthew 4:4 NAS)

He answered, "Get lost, Satan, I can live without that lentil stew of lies. But I can't *really* live if I sell my soul to you."

Satan sold a second lie that day outside of Jacob's tent. It, too, was a warmed-over re-run. He said that the end justifies

Let's Make a Deal

the means. He said to Eve, "God wants you wise, doesn't He? It is *how* you do it that is in question." He took Jesus up to a high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and said, "I will give it all to you. Just fall down and worship me. You want a kingdom, don't you? This is just a little shortcut." Shortcut, indeed. It went around the Cross. All of his shortcuts do. He said to Jacob, "The birthright belongs to you. Here is your chance. Take it the easy way. Just do it my way. The end justifies the means, doesn't it?" Satan had pitched his big bargain tent and gone for the big sale. Esau sold out at the Five and Dime. Jacob sold out under the big tent. But Jesus looked Satan straight in the eye and said, "Be gone, Satan. For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.'" Then the devil left him and the angels came and began to minister to Him.

My friends, the super salesman of subtlety still wanders the streets of hearts going to and fro throughout the earth saying, "Tell you what I'm a gonna do." When we stop to listen, in a moment of weakness, when he has our attention, he says to us, "Let's make a deal." Whether he uses his Esau pitch or his Jacob story is incidental. He is like a roaring lion going about seeking whom he may devour. He went after Isaac and Rebekah's kids with a couple of whoppers. "Take the here and now, you are dying anyhow. Easy come, easy go. The end justifies the means. We are all looking for the same thing."

The problem is that Satan has gone after our kids, a whole generation of them, with the same barbed bait. "Look at all this," he says, "You can have it all if you do it my way, without the Cross." What we need to understand, particularly those of you whose children are young, is that it's never too early to begin to share with them the reality of who Satan is and what it is he is doing. I believe it's important when they are able to understand, to begin to teach them his tactics because he really only has three: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. The Scripture says,

"These things are not of the Father, but of the world and the world passes away and the lusts thereof, but he that does the will of God abides forever." (1 John 2:15-17 paraphrase)

If you go back and look at Satan's ways, there are those three approaches over and over. Look at his tactics in the garden. Go back and look at his tactics in the wilderness. You will find

Let's Make a Deal

three questions with the same pattern every time: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Same attack, just new words. It is important to teach our children that this is the program that Satan is on and these are the attacks that he always uses. We need to be able to say when he attacks, "Now children, where do you think Satan was coming from today?" Let them figure out for themselves what the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life mean. Before long, they will begin to recognize who he is and where he is coming from themselves. They, without our help, will begin to take up the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God when they see him coming.

We must also teach them early how to use the Scripture the way Jesus did.

But He answered and said, "It is written,"
(Matthew 4:4 NKJV)

And said to him... "For it is written..." (Matthew 4:6 NKJV)

Jesus said to him, "It is written again..." (Matthew 4:7 NKJV)

Then the devil left Him and the angels came to minister to Him. Only one weapon will make Satan flee. The Word of God. The Word of God. The Word of God. Engraved on the heart, called up by the leading of the Spirit, and flung in the face of Satan. He has no answer for the Word of God. He can take our arguments and twist them, tamper with them, even turn them around and make them look like they match his, but he can do nothing with the Word of God but flee. Do our children really know the Word of God and how to use it when the enemy comes? Do we?

Lastly, ought not we to recommit ourselves as a people and as parents to the dynamic of diversity? Diversity can either be woven into a family pattern of godliness or left to smolder into a pattern of competition and rivalry. Our children are not all alike. They are not all going to be like us, hallelujah. The goal is that they all be like Jesus. May we confess the sin of Isaac, the putting of our children in molds of expectation to satisfy our own egos or to protect our own reputation.

Once again we can learn a lot from Isaac and Rebekah. We can learn a lot from Jacob and Esau. We can learn a lot about God, a lot about Satan, a lot about our children, a lot about ourselves. That is why God included them when He penned the sagas of these living legends. By His precious grace, may we learn well never to sell our birthright. Never. Ask yourself:

WHAT WOULD YOU SELL YOUR BIRTHRIGHT FOR?

What would you sell your birthright for?
Just what is it worth to you?
Like Esau, is it up for grabs
For the likes of a bowl of stew?

For what will you trade the things that last;
The marks of your life in Christ?
How much does Satan need to ask?
How big or how small the price?

What are the things you clutch at?
The treasures you can see?
Or those laid up in heaven
That one day yours will be?

Esau didn't walk alone,
His birthright to despise,
If he were here today, he'd say,
We, too, are not so wise.

We, famished from our hunting
Of things this world affords,
Get a whiff of compromise
And we forget God's words.

We forget eternity
And sell out for today.
We cry, "We're dying anyhow."
But what a price we pay.

Cherish your birthright, Christian,
Those things that make you whole;
Or else you may the whole world gain
And trade your very soul,

And when you've gained the world's acclaim
And heeded Satan's call,
You'll have but a mess of pottage
And you'll have lost it all.

Let's Make a Deal
For Focus and Application

1- Name three seemingly major areas of life that have given over to the greed of this age. How have we, as individual believers, bought the lie?

2- Why do you think God made this universe with such diversity in mind? Consider the animal kingdom. How does their diversity actually protect and provide for them? How about the issue of glorifying God? Does the number of different kinds of fish in the ocean, with all of their differences, actually cause you to worship the more? Why?

3- Why do we want our children to be more alike? What is our real motive? Why didn't God do that? What does the phrase "train up a child in the way he should go" actually mean?

4- Are you partial in your dealings with your children? With others? Why do we do that? What can we do to stop it?

5- Make a list of the things Esau gave up for that one bowl of stew. Can you think of parallels in your own life where you gave up something that ultimately cost you part of your spiritual heritage for something that you didn't need or that you shouldn't have had?

6- Why do we seem to so often say to God, "I'll die if this doesn't happen"? What are we really saying? What does Satan try to do *whenever we come to that conclusion*?

7- Read Matthew 4:1-11 again. Memorize I John 2:15-17. Now try to put those two passages together. Find the three basic temptations in the wilderness. Find them in Genesis 3:1-7. Take the time to look for them in your own life this week. Satan has not changed his tactics. He has not had to. We still fall for the same three lies.

8- What kinds of shortcuts is Satan trying to get you to take that seem to the natural mind sensible, but eliminate the Cross and the dynamics of dying to self? Make a list. Ask God to reveal them to you as the temptations come.

9- Don't be afraid to discuss Satan with your family. Don't be afraid of him. Have a healthy understanding of his plans and his practices, and learn together to stand against him.

dtm DISCIPLESHIP TAPE MINISTRIES, INC.

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230

210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778

www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org • © Russell Kelfer