



In December 2012, USA Today published an article titled "Dishonesty was on display everywhere in 2012."

"Cheating is nothing new. But the steady stream of famous faces and institutions that got caught up in it this year seems unprecedented — 2012 may well have been the Year of the Cheater.

Finish this statement: "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive

The Lord has given us an example of a man who weaved quite a tangled web of deceit. It caught up to him. The OT character Jacob teaches us a valuable lesson. When you are trapped by your deceit, you must run to meet God face to face. You must confront your failures, lies, and deceit by coming face to face with God. It is only then that you can be set free from your deceitfulness. This was Jacob's testimony. He said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." His life was changed one night where he was forced to confront his sin.

You must realize that deception denies God's Character.

1. When you deceive, you attempt to deny God's Sovereignty.

While carrying Jacob and Esau, Rebekah felt the two boys struggling in the womb. They were already fighting. She asked the Lord what was happening. In His response, He gave a promise.

"and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." - Gen. 23:25b

Rebekah and Jacob could not summon the trust necessary to believe that God would fulfill His plan on His own.

2. When you deceive, you attack God's Nature.

Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie;

John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

You must realize that deception destroys your Relationships.

Fast forward about 20 years in Jacob's life. He was in the process of returning home after he had fled 20 years earlier because Esau wanted to kill him.

1. Jacob did not trust Esau. (Horizontal Relationship)

Genesis 32:6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. 7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed:

2. Jacob did not trust God. (Vertical Relationship)

Genesis 32:1-2 And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. 2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

A few verses later...

Genesis 32: 7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; 8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

You must realize that deception is defeated by wrestling with the truth.

1. Jacob wrestled with God face to face. (32:22-26)

Gen. 32: 22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. 23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. 24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. [this was God - vs. 30] 25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

2. Jacob wrestled with himself face to face. (32:27-32)

Gen 32: 27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

Are you here tonight and you are running? You've been attacking the character of God by being dishonest and deceptive. Your relationships are being destroyed because your only allegiance is to yourself. Get honest with yourself. Are you going to continue deceiving yourself and others? or will you admit your sin and change? God changed Jacob's name from "One who grabs" to Israel. Scholars translate this name in a few different ways. "One who wrestles with God," or "Let God rule." God changed Jacob that night. Will you allow God to change you tonight?