

How Jacob's Story Teaches You to Move Forward, Even if You 'Walk With a Limp'

Do you ever have one of those days when you feel like you are just limping through life? In the natural, I have been limping through life as I wait for knee surgery. Since I love to be active and have a strong dislike for pain, the season has been filled with moments of frustration. If I step incorrectly, the knee pain shoots up and down my entire leg. Even in the middle of the night, it can make itself known as the discomfort creeps in like an unwelcome visitor. I step outside to a nice day, and everything in me longs to go for a walk. My knee agrees if it doesn't have to go! Since that doesn't seem to be an option, I opt out of the walk with a sigh. So I hobble from place to place, determined to do what has to be done, yet slowed down and maybe even a bit annoyed!

I find myself sympathizing with Jacob. In Genesis 32:22-32 (NLT), we find Jacob wrestling with God:

During the night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two servant wives, and his eleven sons and crossed the Jabbok River with them. After taking them to the other side, he sent over all his possessions.

This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob's hip and wrenched it out of its socket. Then the man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!"

But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

"What is your name?" the man asked.

He replied, "Jacob."

"Your name will no longer be Jacob," the man told him. "From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won."

"Please tell me your name," Jacob said.

"Why do you want to know my name?" the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there.

Jacob named the place Peniel (which means "face of God"), for he said, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared." 31 The sun was rising as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of the injury to his hip.

First, I find it extremely interesting that "the man" realized he could not win against Jacob. As I ponder the verse, I realize this is the moment when free will enters. God will never override our free will. He never wants us to be robots; rather, He desires a relationship with us.

Jacob struggled all his life, but in the midst of his challenge, he cried out for blessing. God changed his name from "Jacob" to "Israel," and I have no doubt that he limped away from that encounter forever changed.

In the moments of life's imperfections and pain, God longs for our focus to remain solely on Him.

During this time, where I have been forced to slow down, I can make a choice. Frustration can rule the day, or I can focus on the Lord. I may be limping in the physical, but it doesn't mean that I must limp in the spiritual. In every situation, I can adjust my focus and know that God will bless me.

If you are in a season where you are limping through life, adjust the lens through which you are looking. Don't allow frustration, failure, hopelessness, anxiety or annoyance to

rule your day. Ask the Lord to help you lift your head and look to Him. Where we focus changes everything, even when we are walking with a limp.

To hear more of Ruth Hendrickson's teaching on changing your perspective and walking with a limp, listen to the podcasts [here](#) and [here](#).