

GENESIS

BEGINNING

BETRAYAL

BLESSING

Message Reflections

May 7, 2023

“The touch of the Lord is the hand of the Lord, chastising and giving life.”

– Works of St. Augustine, 31:223

Read Genesis 32:22-32 and Hosea 12:1-6.

Often, we only see our normal circumstances and forget there is a spiritual reality that oversees them. Jacob's struggle was not only with Esau, it was also with God and within himself. God wanted to change Jacob through his difficulties.

In the same way, God has always been wrestling with you, seeking your submission to His will and purpose. Following are three principles you can learn about God's purposes in your trials and consider how you might respond.

God's purpose in your trials is for you to focus on Him.

- Why is it so easy to let busyness crowd God out of our lives? How has God used trials to help you focus on Him more? How do you practice the discipline of solitude—daily getting alone with God?

God's purpose in your trials is for you to recognize your need for Him.

- What are your areas of strength which can lead you to believe you can rely on yourself instead of God? In what ways have you experienced God touching your strength, so that you cling more deeply to Him and experience His power?

God's purpose in your trials is to bless you.

- In what ways have you experienced God's blessing after going through a trial? How can you, in faith, hold on to this truth while suffering?

“Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” - James 1:4