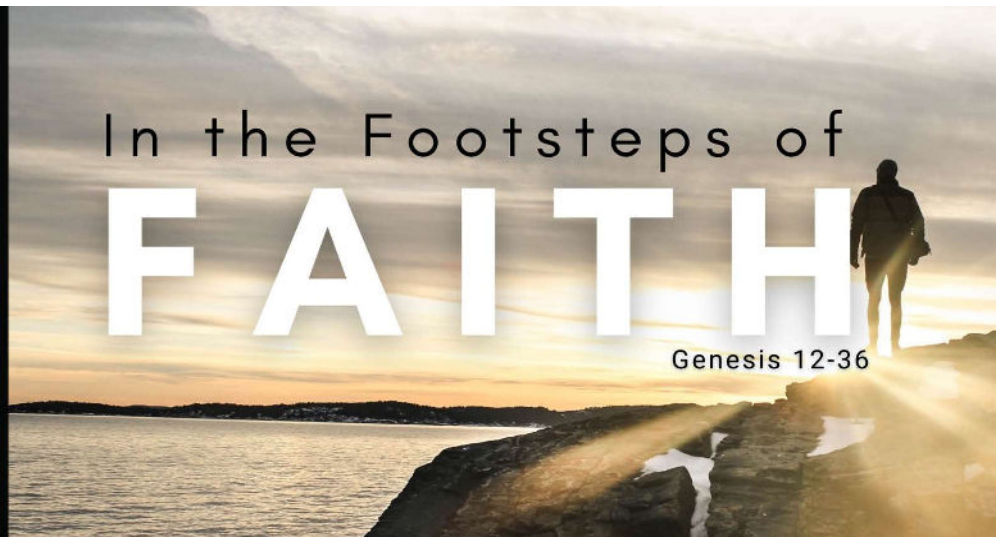




Midweek Study

Dr. Josh Franklin • Senior Pastor



Knowing and Doing the Will of God

(Genesis 31:1-55)

1) The **Crisis** (Genesis 31:1-3)

V. 3 – God commands Jacob to go back home. However, 6 years before, Jacob wanted to go back home. (see Genesis 30:25)

V. 2 – Jealousy has overtaken Laban's sons. Laban's countenance has changed toward Jacob. He can read the body language.

2) The **Consultation** (Genesis 31:4-16)

Jacob is wise to confer with his wives. God may choose to use our spouse to help show His will to us.

They affirm that Laban has squandered all their money and not been good to them either. What a sad indictment.

"It is a wonderful thing when a man's family testify on his behalf. As I have said, Jacob was far from perfect. But his conduct before Laban and all who were watching had been upright, and all who knew him knew this—beginning with his family. So they were ready to follow him. They followed him, not because he was stronger than Laban but because he was right."¹

3) The **Chase** (Genesis 31:17-24)

v.17-21 – Jacob's escape

v.22-24 – Laban's pursuit

¹ James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis: An Expositional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 803.

4) The **Confrontation** (Genesis 31:25-42)

v.25-35 – Laban is exaggerating. He could have taken care of them while they were with him, but as reported to Jacob earlier, he refused.

Thomas accurately states, “Love expressed so late as this cannot be worth much. It is what we are prepared to do for our loved ones while they are with us, not the kind of things we say of them after they are gone, that is the real test and genuine measure of our affection.”²

Rachel deceives her father concerning the idols she stole from him. This kind of trickery seems to run in the family.

Wiersbe writes, “Why did Rachel steal her father’s household idols? Archeological evidence indicates that the person possessing such gods was guaranteed the family inheritance, but Rachel was leaving home and would have no inheritance coming. Rachel was deeply hurt because of the way her father had treated her, and this was her way of retaliating; and it’s likely her faith in Jehovah wasn’t that strong. It’s possible that Laban used these idols for divination (30:27), and Rachel stole them in order to keep him from knowing too much. Later, Jacob commanded everybody in the family to give up their idols, and he buried them (35:1-4).”³

v.36-42 – Jacob uses the opportunity to rebuke Laban for his accusations.

5) The **Covenant** (Genesis 31:43-55)

The feud will end with making this covenant. A pillar is placed and then a pile of stones. “The pillar is called ‘Mizpah’ (‘watch tower’) and is regarded as the symbol of the Lord watching between the two parties to the covenant and keeping guard over the agreement, lest either should break it.”⁴

Steps to Knowing God’s Will

1. **Desire** – What do you desire? Is God giving you a desire? (See [Psalm 37:4](#))
2. **Circumstances** – Are circumstances pointing in one direction? (See [Deuteronomy 32:11](#))
3. **Inner witness** – Where do you believe God is leading? (See [Romans 8:14](#))
4. **Confirmation from others** – What do other godly people say you should do? (See [Proverbs 11:14](#))
5. **Obedience** – What are you waiting for? (See [Ezra 7:10](#))

***“Trust and obey, for there’s no other way,
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”***

² W.H. Griffith Thomas, *Genesis: A Devotional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1953), 286.

³ Warren Wiersbe, *Be Authentic*, “Be” Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor Pub., 1997), 48.

⁴ Thomas, 287.