



Discussion Questions • “Thriving not only Surviving the Pandemic” • 9/13/2020

Question 1:

Randy quoted one of his heroes named Dave Busby and recounted Dave saying he didn't “want to just survive the 90s and whatever they being the decade entails, but he wanted to thrive...” What are some ways you have seen other people or yourself have THRIVED in the midst of the COVID crisis?

Question 2:

The sermon contrasted “Thriving” with “Surviving” and referenced Esau's desire for a ‘bowl of soup’ as a picture of his willingness to ‘settle’ for something less than what is best in life. What are some ways that we, like Esau, just survive during difficult times? Why does ‘thriving’ require taking a longer-term view vs. instant gratification?

Question 3:

Esau was willing to ‘sell his birthright’ for his own “immediate gratification and pleasure.” What are some ways that you have heard of Christians doing this in BIG ways? What about little ways? What are some of your ‘birth rights’ as a believer? How do we ‘sell them out’?

Question 4:

Think about how dysfunctional that family was. A manipulative Jacob and a brutish Esau with parents who played favorites and yet God works... How can that encourage us when we think that we are on “plan B” as people or as families or that we might have ‘sinned our way out of God's good grace...’? Or maybe think of it like this— maybe you haven't been ‘thriving’ in the midst of the pandemic; maybe you have just been ‘surviving’— what if God wasn't speaking to you this morning to chastise you, but rather to ENCOURAGE YOU— he uses people in survival mode too, right?

Question 5:

Jacob desired a good thing (the birthright) but went about getting it in a bad way. The desire is good, but the deception is bad. However, as Randy pointed out, God explicitly expresses his love for Jacob in Romans 9. Why? How could God say that he loved a manipulative birthright thief? Doesn't his behavior disqualify him from God's commendation and affection? (Absolutely NOT, why?)

Question 6:

Randy quoted J.I. Packer who said, “*There is tremendous relief in knowing his love to me is utterly realistic, based at every point on prior knowledge of the worst about me, so that no discovery can disillusion him about me, in the way I am so often disillusioned about myself, and quench is determination to bless me.*” How can that truth allow you to thrive?

Question 7:

Where have you been bargaining with God? Where have you been selling little bowls of your own birthright? Have you been negotiating with yourself? Have you ‘sold out’ using secret sins no one else knows about or have you been ‘selling out’ demanding that life be all about yourself— your desires in the moment? Your appetite for this or that? Your wants and wishes?

FINAL POINT OF PERSONAL CONSIDERATION:

You can't ‘bargain your way in’ and you can't ‘bargain your way out’ of the Kingdom. How is God calling you to repent of all your ‘bargaining’ and rest in him? 2,000 years from now the pandemic will be a small Wikipedia entry about half a year in mid-2020, but 2,000 years from now you will be in His presence forever. Which of those two realities will shape the decisions you make tomorrow morning?