

*Sermon Questions for Life Groups*  
*The Gospel According to Genesis:*  
*What's in a Name?: Genesis 29:31-30:24*  
Pastor John Mahaffey  
Sunday, September 27, 2015

*These questions are generated by several authors for Life Group discussions  
or family or personal devotions*

1. This passage is largely a litany of the names of Jacob's sons, but each of the names has a meaning. What do the names of the boys reveal about the hearts of Leah and Rachel?
2. If your name were changed to reflect your character, what would that new name be? Have your group members suggest a name for you.
3. Jacob does not appear to have had any input into the naming process? Discuss why this may be or if there are other passages of Scripture where the father is involved in the naming.
4. What does this passage show about polygamy? Does Jacob's possession of several wives provide an example of a warning concerning right ideals for marriage?
5. Does Jacob's response to Rachel in Gen. 30:2 seem harsh when you consider his own appeals to God for blessing in the past? Why would he do this?
6. Unlike chapter 29:1-30 - the story of how Jacob was deceived by Laban - God is mentioned several times. What do these references to God say about him? Which of the references make false and true statements about God? What do these false statements reveal about the emotions and thinking of Jacob's wives?

7. Both Leah and Rachel had great pain but the passage at the beginning focuses more on Leah's pain. What do you think was the root of all the pain in her life? How might her experience help us to discern how our pain can affect us adversely throughout life?
8. Pastor John spoke about Rachel invoking the "Hagar Solution". What does that really mean? In our daily walk with God, how can we ascertain or determine what the actual will of God is? Do you believe in a specific path or are there several paths from which to choose that can be deemed as falling within the acceptable "range" of God's sovereign will?
9. Separating cultural norms from Biblical principles can be tricky sometimes, but in the case of Abraham it resulted in fathering the future perennial conflicts between Jews, Christians and Muslims. Discuss what positive or negative (or neutral) effects resulted with the birth of the 12 sons through 4 different women?
10. What is the ultimate message of this story? Is there a moral to be learned?
11. Through all of the mess, somehow God's sovereign purpose(s) were still achieved. Discuss what those purposes were?
12. How do you see God working in the mess of history and your own life?