

# WE PUT OURSELVES FIRST

## STORY: FALL

### BIG TRUTH: WE PUT OURSELVES FIRST

Romans 1:28-32; Galatians 5:20; Philippians 2:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:1-2; James 3:16

### BIBLE VERSE: PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4

*"Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."*

### BIG IDEAS

- Our sin makes us selfish.
- Our sin blinds us to the needs of others.
- Our sin causes us to love self more than our family.
- Only the gospel can make us selfless.

### BIBLE STORY: GENESIS 27

Isaac made plans to give his oldest son, Esau a great blessing. Isaac's wife, Rebekah, wanted their youngest son, Jacob to receive the blessing instead, so she helped Jacob deceive his father by pretending to be Esau. Jacob did receive Esau's blessing, but he lost his family in the process. Our sin makes us selfish. It causes us to put ourselves first.

### STORY: FALL

Everything was perfect in the world until we broke it. When humanity chose to sin, the world that was once perfect became messed up and broken. Sin is ultimately a rejection of God Himself. Because of sin bad things happen, we experience all types of pain, and death has come into the world. All of creation groans and wishes that the world be perfect and good like it was before.

### BIG AIMS



**Every child should know that:**

- Sin has broken our families



**Every child should feel:**

- Burdened at how sin breaks our families



**Every child should:**

- Be aware of the ways their sin affects their family



**Every child should want:**

- Their family to be made new by Christ

### FAMILY DEVOTION: A LOVE OF SELF

Sin makes us selfish. We are blinded by our own selfishness because of our sinful hearts. We desire to please ourselves and we even love ourselves more than we love our family.

**BIBLE VERSE: PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4**

*“Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”*

**Our natural inclination is to be conceited and jealous.**

- Our hearts are sinful and they lead us to choose ourselves over others.
- Our hearts leads us to focus on ourselves and to think of ourselves as more important than others.
- Because of our sin nature, we do not naturally think of others as more significant than ourselves.
- We focus on ourselves and desire our own happiness above all else.
- We do not have to be taught to be selfish or self-centered. Instead, we have to be taught how to share and consider the needs of others.

**The gospel makes it possible for us to love others more than we love ourselves.**

- Loving others more than we love ourselves is not possible without the help of God’s Spirit.
- God showed us how to love others more than ourselves by sending His Son to die for our sin.
- The gospel, or story of Jesus’ birth, life, death and resurrection, shows us how to not be conceited or jealous.
- Jesus willingly died for us even though He was without sin. We did nothing to deserve His sacrifice. His death gives us an example of selfless sacrifice.

**Being like Jesus means considering others as more important than yourself.**

- When we repent from our sin and believe in Jesus’ death on the cross, we receive God’s Spirit. His Spirit helps us become more like Jesus.
- As we seek to be like Jesus, we will seek to put others before ourselves.
- We will not live for our own selfish gain. Instead, we will consider others as more important than ourselves and seek to live sacrificially.

**BIBLE STORY: GENESIS 27**

*Jacob and Esau*

**Opening Illustration:**

Have each child make his or her own scepter using empty paper towel holders. You can use different colors of wrapping paper, stickers, and markers to decorate the “scepters”. After the children make their own “scepters”, talk to them about what a scepter symbolizes (power and authority) and then talk about how we want to rule ourselves. We reject God, His joy, power, and rule when we desire to rule ourselves.

**BIG IDEA: OUR SIN MAKES US SELFISH.<sup>1</sup>****Our sin nature is self-focused.**

- We are naturally selfish. We are focused inward on ourselves and not outward on others.
- Our sin nature is not a giving nature.
- Our sin nature is conceited and puffed up. It thinks only of itself.
- Jacob was focused on himself and his own future instead of his brother's.
- Rebekah was thinking of what would make her happy instead of what was best for their family.



Divide the children into groups and have them write their own definition of selfish. Allow the groups to share and then define the word using a dictionary. Remind the children that our sin nature makes us selfish.

**Because of our sin nature, we are concerned only for our own needs.**

- Our sin nature is naturally self-centered.
- We not only think only of ourselves, but we are focused only on our own needs.
- Because we focus so much on ourselves, we pursue the things that make us happy.
- We do not think about how our pursuit of our own happiness will affect those around us.
- Jacob pursued his own happiness at the cost of his relationship with Esau.

**Sin works in our hearts and results in selfishness.**

- The sin in our hearts results in our wrong actions and attitudes.
- Our hearts are naturally sinful. Our actions and attitudes show what is in our hearts.
- Rebekah's actions revealed her sinful heart as she led Jacob to deceive his father.

*How does sin make us selfish? (It causes us to think only of ourselves and not of others. This leads us to make choices that are selfish and self-centered.)*

1. Galatians 5:19-22: Our sin nature results in sinful and selfish actions and attitudes.

**BIG IDEA: OUR SIN BLINDS US TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.<sup>2</sup>****Sin makes us so selfish that we do not see the needs of others.**

- Our sin keeps us focused on ourselves and prevents us from seeing the needs of other people.
- Not only do we not see the needs of others, but our sin makes us uncaring towards others.
- We focus more on ourselves and making ourselves happy and we overlook the needs of other people.
- Rebekah was focused on making sure that Jacob received the blessing. Her actions were harmful towards her husband and their oldest son.



Bring in a blindfold. Have the children take turns wearing the blindfold and drawing an object from a bag. Ask the children to guess the object they remove from the bag. After they guess, have them remove the blindfold to see if they are correct or not. Remind the children that our sin blinds us to the needs of other people.

**Sin leads us to turn away from the needs of others.**

- Many people are in great need and continue in their pain because our sin causes us to turn a blind eye to them.
- Instead of looking after the needs of other people, we do not really see them in their distress.
- Our sinful hearts cause us to ignore the suffering of others and poverty around us.
- Our hearts are darkened because of sin and that leads us to only think of ourselves.

**Our sinful hearts lead us to love ourselves the most.**

- We naturally love ourselves more than we love anyone else.
- We do not have to be taught to love ourselves. We are born focused on ourselves and loving ourselves more than anyone else.
- We must learn to love others, but we cannot really love others until we know Christ.

*What does our sin blind us to? (It blinds us to the needs of others. It makes us focus on ourselves instead of others.)*

2. 1 John 3:17-18: Love is from God. We do not naturally show love towards others, but when we know God, we learn how to love others.

**BIG IDEA: OUR SIN CAUSES US TO LOVE SELF MORE THAN OUR FAMILY.<sup>3</sup>****Our sin nature loves our self more than others.**

- We do not naturally love others as we should.
- Our sin nature keeps us from really loving other people like we should because our sin makes us selfish.
- We choose to make ourselves happy instead of loving other people.
- Rebekah chose to please herself by helping Jacob take his brother's blessing.
- We choose ourselves over others a lot. We do things that make us happy and keep us satisfied instead of doing things that make others happy.



Ask the children to draw a house using markers and white cardstock. Next, help the children brainstorm ways they can love their families in sacrificial ways. For example, they can clear the dinner table, help put away the laundry, seek to get along with siblings, etc. Remind the children that we don't naturally love others more than ourselves.

**Because we are naturally selfish, we love ourselves more than our families.**

- We are not born loving our families more than we love ourselves.
- Our sin nature keeps us from loving our families the way God loves us, sacrificially.
- We seek to fulfill our own desires and do things that make us happy.
- Rebekah sought to fulfill her desire of seeing her son, Jacob receive a blessing from his father.
- Jacob sought to make himself happy by going along with his mother's idea.
- In our families, we do not put other family members before ourselves because of our sinful hearts.
- We do not willingly share with our siblings or happily agree to help our parents.
- We focus on what makes us comfortable and happy in our home.
- This selfishness is born from our sinful hearts inherited at birth.

*What does sin cause us to love more than family? (It causes us to love ourselves more than we love our family.)*

3. Ephesians 5:29: *We don't hate ourselves. Our sin nature leads us to love and nourish ourselves.*

**BIG IDEA: ONLY THE GOSPEL CAN MAKE US SELFLESS.<sup>4</sup>****God loved the world as He loved Himself.**

- Jesus gave His followers two main commands. The first is to love God with all that we have and the second is to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.
- God showed us the way to love others like we love ourselves by sending His Son to die for our sins.
- God loved the world and gave up His only Son for it.
- It is only this story of God's love and our repentance and belief in it that can change our sinful hearts and help us love others selflessly.
- Jacob did not show selfless love to his brother. He loved himself more than he loved Esau.
- We, too, are like Jacob. We seek our own well-being over the well-being of others.

**Jesus sets the example for how to love others.**

- The gospel is the story of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection.
- It is the only thing that changes our sinful hearts to righteous hearts.
- It is only through the gospel that we can know how to truly love other people.
- Jesus willingly set aside His divine powers to come to earth and live as a human being.
- He sacrificed Himself for the world, even though the world did not deserve to be saved.
- We can know how to love other through Jesus' example to us.

**Only when we know God can we really love others.**

- God is love. Love comes from Him.
- We cannot truly love others when we are separated from God because He is love.
- When we know God, we receive His Spirit and His Spirit guides us to love others as we should.
- We can know God by repenting of our sinfulness and believing that Jesus died on the cross to pay our sin debt.
- When we understand our own sinfulness and turn away from it, we are reconciled to God.
- Knowing God helps us know true love and helps us love others as we should.

*How can the gospel help us love others selflessly? (It guides us to love others in a giving and sacrificial way because we understand that Jesus loves us in that way.)*

4. Mark 12:31: Jesus gave two commandments to His followers. The second commandment is to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. Without Jesus, this is impossible.

## HOOKS

**A Hand Of Love**

Give each child a blank piece of paper and a marker. Help the children trace one of their hands. Next, give the children different colored markers and ask them to write one way that they can show love to their family on each finger using a different colored marker for each finger. Allow the children to share their hands of love with the class and then lead them in a discussion about how we don't naturally love others more than ourselves.

**A Hairy Deception**

Place the outline of a person on the wall using a large poster board or long piece of paper. Next, give each child a piece of yarn. Use a bandana as a blindfold and have the children take turns trying to pin their pieces of yarn to the person on the wall. Once every child has a chance, lead them in a discussion about how our sin makes us selfish and keeps us from loving others.



- Jacob deceived his father by pretending to be his brother, Esau.
- Jacob's sin caused him to love himself more than he loved Esau.
- Our sin causes us to love ourselves more than we love others.
- Our sin makes us selfish and self-centered.
- When we have the gospel, we can truly love others in an unselfish way.