



Big Idea

Pastor Curt – Part 4

This week we continued our series entitled Fiery Darts and Pastor Curt talked about Jacob, the father of the nation of Israel. From the first moments of his life, Jacob was always fighting to promote himself. Even as he exited his mother's womb, he held on to his older twin brother's heel, trying to arrive before him. Because of his ongoing efforts to promote himself, Jacob caused great division in his family and ended up living for many years limited by great tension and fear. The greatest breakthrough of Jacob's life came through an encounter with God that caused him to finally stop **trying to control everything in his life** including his own destiny. Today, if Jacob were here, he would say, "Let God have control of your life!"

When we struggle to control our own lives, we become exhausted, our self-perception and esteem limit what we can accomplish, and we become emotionally depleted. **If we surrender control to God**, He gives us a **new strength** to be productive without wearing out, a **new identity** that enables us to fulfill the greater purpose for which He created us, and a **new joy** that defies our circumstances. Jacob would encourage us to humble ourselves before God, knowing that **brokenness precedes breakthrough**. We cannot be who God intends us to be and at the same time hold on to what we think we should be. Jacob would also remind us that **we must lose ourselves to find ourselves**. We cannot allow what we think we want to get in the way of who God made us to be. We have to let Him lead. And finally, Jacob would tell us this last powerful truth: **"When you find yourself on God's terms, you find fulfillment."** We'll never know what our life could become until we hand it over to the One who created it. Let's surrender our life to God and pursue everything He has for us with new strength, identity and joy! **"Take your everyday, ordinary life – your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life – and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for Him."** – Romans 12:1 MSG

Discussion Questions

- Talk about a time when you were attempting to control your own life. What difficulties did you encounter as you fought for it? Share what ultimately inspired you to hand over the reins to God.
- Discuss the fact that God's view of you is different than your view. While you see your limitations, God sees your potential. How does this make you feel? Thinking about your past or your self-perception, share what you need to release in order to receive the new identity God has for you.
- Talk about where you currently are, on a scale of 1 (white-knuckled control) to 10 (total surrender). What practical steps can you take this week to move up the scale and release more of your life to God?

Prayer Focus

Thank God for His desire to give you new strength, identity and joy. Ask Him for discernment to know which areas of your life you need to release to Him, and ask Him to help you hand over control. Recognize before Him that His plans for your life are greater than your own and you can trust that He will take care of you.

Next Steps

Identify the areas of your life where you are holding on to control, and place them before God as an offering. Humble yourself, let God lead, and hand your life over to Him.

Leader Tip

When ministering to someone in your group, remember ESPN. Encourage – Share Scripture – Pray – Next Steps