



CEO Devotional – April 21, 2014
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Wrestling with God

The word “wrestle” may conjure up a sweaty match with a victor and a loser; however, when we wrestle with our God, we are always a winner. Just as Jacob was finally pinned by the angel of the Lord, he was also blessed with his full inheritance. His limp is a symbol of the transformation he went through. Consider words other than wrestle and choose one that matches your attitude – argue, persuade, debate, complain, challenge, question, pursue, converse, shout, etc.

There is a long history in the Bible of wrestling with God – Abraham on the fate of Sodom (Genesis 18); the story of Jacob mentioned above (Genesis 32); David and his psalms; Hezekiah and his impending death (2 Kings 20); Jonah and the prophecy for Nineveh; Jeremiah’s complaints about how the wicked prosper (Jeremiah 12) and his own dejection (Jeremiah 15); the story of Job; the widow who complained to the judge (Luke 18); the Canaanite woman who wanted healing scraps from the Lord’s table (Matthew 15); the woman who grabbed Jesus’ robe for healing (Luke 8); and Jesus Himself in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26).

The prophet Hosea instructs us to learn from the example of Jacob and to “return to God ... and wait [expectantly, AMP] on your God continually.” Habakkuk shares his struggle with God in words applicable to all of us in Habakkuk 2:1:^{1 (NRSV)} *I will stand at my watch post, and station myself on the rampart; I will keep watch to see what He will say to me, and what He will answer concerning my complaint.* (He says this after 17 verses of complaints to God!)

So where do you begin the wrestling match? In my own life I have found that I have had recurring challenges about trusting God, my financial future, and how to handle challenging situations at work. I had a substantial period of wrestling with God about trust – not from a knowledge perspective but from a heart perspective. Ultimately God used some very special verses to penetrate my heart. And when it comes to worrying about my future and how to handle challenging situations at work, God’s message repeatedly was to spend sufficient quiet time with Him in the morning so that I can live my day in the now and be able to hear His quiet voice leading me from time to time. The result is a new attitude of greater peacefulness and less negative energy about my personal concerns; people really can see the difference!

Consider the following questions (allow time for a two minute reflection):

- What are you excited about?
- What is troubling you or causing you to be anxious?
- What are you driven by or frightened or uncertain about?
- How do you condemn yourself?
- What burdens are you carrying?
- What is blocking you from trusting God or having a more intimate relationship with Jesus?

Answer one of these questions and take your concern to Him. Sit before Him in prayer, scripture, meditation and worship and whatever other mode puts you in His presence. As you seek to listen to God you are likely to find that He wants to speak to you where you have fear or anxiety or doubt in your heart. His priority may be different from yours so be open to go where He wants to lead you. Believe that He promises to share truth with you and set you free (John 8:31-32).

Homework:

- 1) Memorize John 8:31-32.
- 2) Start your wrestling match with God.
- 3) Find a scripture that points you towards truth.