

CONNECTED

with Pastor Jacquie

In The Beginning Genesis: Lesson Seventeen

Sunday School

October 12, 2025

What does it mean that “Esau despised his birthright”?

The birthright of the eldest male child in the ancient Near East conferred upon him three things - a double portion of the paternal inheritance, he became the priest of the family, and he inherited the judicial authority of his father.

Esau traded this for one serving of food which satisfied him for only a few hours, Esau gave up blessings that extended into eternity!

When Esau finally realized what he had done, it was too late to alter his decision.

We are told that Esau “despised his birthright” (verse 34). The word translated “despised” (Genesis 29:34) is a Hebrew word (*bazah*) meaning “to regard with contempt.” The word was used to describe the contempt of Saul’s army when they saw David preparing to fight Goliath (1 Samuel 17:42). It was not that Esau hated his birthright, but rather that he didn’t value it very highly. He allowed his momentary hunger to cloud his judgment and did not think past the feeling in his belly to grasp what he was truly giving up and how it would affect his descendants. The stew that it purchased satisfied his hunger for a time, but the birthright itself could have sustained him for a lifetime. Esau lived to regret his decision

Genesis 25:29-34 depicts Esau as a man who lives only for the moment and does not take the cost of his decisions into account. Matthew Henry says, “He went on his way without any serious reflections upon the bad bargain he had made or any show of regret.”

When we think of how ridiculous it is that Esau would give up his birthright for a meal, it is hard not to see how we so often do the same exact thing. When God has a promise for us and a blessing if we follow His ways, but we decide to embrace a short-term pleasure, we miss out on our "birthright" as a son of God. When we choose to watch some mindless shows on TV rather than spend some quiet time in fellowship with our Heavenly Father or when we quench the Holy Spirit through our sin, we too are despising our birthright.

The warning for us as believers is not to esteem the grace of God lightly -- not to risk it all or sell our birthright in Jesus Christ to enjoy the temporary pleasures of this world.

The point for Christians today is that we must value our spiritual inheritance as the most precious thing in our lives and not give it up for anything!

APPLICATION QUESTION:

Have you despised your birthright in the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you counted it of so little value that you have risked it all for the sake of the pleasures of this world? If so, look to God for mercy now, before it is too late!

QUOTE:

“Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us, He waits so long, so very long, in vain.” *A. W. Tozer*

PRAYER:

Lord, I pray that I will not be like Esau despising your work of grace in my life. Let me never treat Your payment or my sin cheaply. But help me to show my gratitude by living a life that pleases You each day. Amen

Read Genesis Chapters 25 & 26