

# TWO PEOPLES WILL COME FROM **YOU**

## MAIN POINT.

**Jealousy** and **pride**  
lead us to make  
selfish decisions.



## CHRIST CONNECTION

Isaac and his family proved themselves to be sinners by their selfish and self-centered actions. This is the natural way of humanity. But God was sovereignly orchestrating events and redeeming this family's sin to fulfill His promise to Abraham. God would still make Abraham into a great nation through Isaac and Jacob, which would ultimately lead to Jesus, who fulfilled humanity's need for salvation from sin.



## DECEPTION

## — LACK OF FAITH

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to read all of the content on the timeline as you prepare to teach.

Genesis 25

Genesis 28

### JEALOUSY LEADS TO SIN

#### GENESIS 25:21-26

21 Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife because she was childless. The LORD was receptive to his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. 22 But the children inside her struggled with each other, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said to her: Two nations are in your womb; two peoples will come from you and be separated. One people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger. 24 When her time came to give birth, there were indeed twins in her womb. 25 The first one came out red-looking, covered with hair like a fur coat, and they named him Esau. 26 After this, his brother came out grasping Esau's heel with his hand. So he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.

### SIN LEADS US TO DECEIVE OTHERS

#### GENESIS 25:27-34

27 When the boys grew up, Esau became an expert hunter, an outdoorsman, but Jacob was a quiet man who stayed at home. 28 Isaac loved Esau because he had a taste for wild game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. 29 Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field exhausted. 30 He said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stuff, because I'm exhausted." That is why he was also named Edom. 31 Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright." 32 "Look," said Esau, "I'm about to die, so what good is a birthright to me?" 33 Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore to Jacob and sold his birthright to him. 34 Then Jacob gave bread and lentil stew to Esau; he ate, drank, got up, and went away. So Esau despised his birthright.

#### GENESIS 27:6-10,18-19

6 Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "Listen! I heard your father talking with your brother Esau. He said, 'Bring me game and make a delicious meal for me to eat so that I can bless you in the LORD's presence before I die.' 8 Now, my son, listen to me and do what I tell you. 9 Go to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, and I will make them into a delicious meal for your father—the kind he loves. 10 Then take it to your father to eat so that he may bless you before he dies." . . . 18 When he came to his father, he said, "My father." And he answered, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" 19 Jacob replied to his father, "I am Esau, your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game so that you may bless me."

# BEFORE YOU TEACH

## MAIN POINT.

Leaders: Thank you for preparing to teach God's Word. As you do, may He teach you new and wonderful truths (Ps. 119:18).

**Jealousy and pride lead us to make selfish decisions.**

## BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

### JEALOUSY LEADS TO SIN

#### GENESIS 25:21

"Now we learn that Isaac was forty when the wedding took place but sixty when the twins were born. Like Abraham, Isaac struggled with the problem of bearing children. But unlike Abraham, he rested in God's promise until the Lord answered his prayer. The Bible emphasizes that the promised line of the Messiah came about only through God's intervention, not by human effort."<sup>1</sup>

### SIN LEADS US TO DECEIVE OTHERS

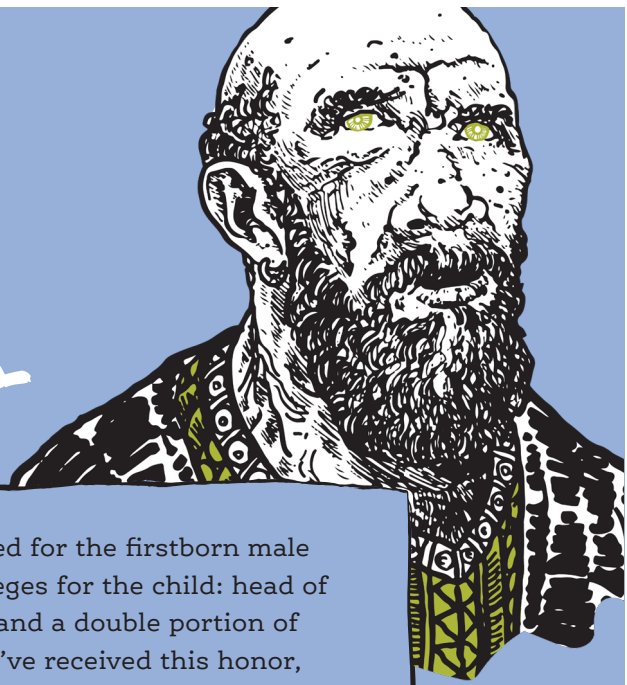
#### GENESIS 27:6-10

"On the surface it appeared that Rebekah and Jacob had won. They got what they went after. But they gained nothing from it that God would not have given to them anyway. Instead, they lost a good deal in the way that they went about things. Jacob would have to flee for his life from the land he thought he had won, and Rebekah would never see him again."<sup>2</sup>

#### GENESIS 27:6-10,18-19

"This makes all four participants in the present scene almost equally at fault. Isaac, whether he knew of the sale or not, knew God's birth-oracle of 25:23, yet set himself to use God's power to thwart it (see verse 29). This is the outlook of magic, not religion. Esau, in agreeing to the plan, broke his own oath of 25:33. Rebekah and Jacob, with a just cause, made no approach to God or man, no gesture of faith or love, and reaped the appropriate fruit of hatred."<sup>3</sup>

## CONTEXT



In ancient Hebrew culture, the birthright was reserved for the firstborn male in each family. This birthright secured several privileges for the child: head of household status, inheritance of the father's estate, and a double portion of everything passed down. Esau, the older son, should've received this honor, but it was prophesied to Rebekah that the second son, Jacob, would rule over the old brother. This set up a situation for immediate feuding between the brothers, and it even led Rebekah and Isaac to choose favorites. The blessing, which the father thoughtfully crafted, could be given to any son, regardless of birth order. It usually revealed the father's last will, but it also was a means of revealing God's will for that child.

## THEOLOGY CONNECTION

### sin as selfishness

When we sin, we are acting out of a selfish attitude and mindset that assumes our action will lead us to more happiness than if we were to obey God. Because sin is manifested in our tendency to be **“curved inward” toward self**, it is the **opposite of love**. Love looks outward to place others before oneself, operating from the mindset that others are more important (Phil. 2:3). Where sin selfishly seeks **personal gratification and happiness**, love works for the joy of others in the hopes of making others happy in God.

## LEADER'S PRAYER

LORD, THANK YOU FOR STILL USING US EVEN  
WHEN WE MAKE SINFUL CHOICES. HELP US  
TO TRUST YOU INSTEAD.



## KICK STARTER

### DID YOU KNOW?

Wellington Burt left his fortune of at least \$110 million to people he never even knew! No one knows exactly why, but Burt demanded that the funds should sit in an account until twenty-one years after the death of his last surviving grandchild!<sup>4</sup>

These optional activities are designed to help your students interact. You'll find a Discussion Activity and a Cultural Connection, which touches on a relevant topic in today's teen culture. Each group is different, so adapt these activities to fit your group's needs. The goal is for students to connect more to the lesson as they connect to the topic and to one another.

# 1

## LIAR, LIAR

### **SUPPLIES LIST: NONE**

Invite each student to create a fifteen second story that contains one lie. Allow students to pair up and give them one minute to tell each other their stories. If they pinpoint the lie in their partner's story correctly, that person is out. When the timer goes off, those whose lies weren't discovered will move on to the next round, pairing with someone new and repeating the process.

When we play games like this, we want to make our lies really "good" and believable. And in life, sometimes we do the same to protect ourselves from the consequences of telling the truth. Often, these decisions are rooted in jealousy and pride. Today, we'll see how one man's selfish decisions play out in God's plan for His people.

# 2

## CULTURAL CONNECTION

Is lying really that big of a deal? What if deceiving someone leads to something good? Our culture downplays the seriousness of lying. In fact, it sometimes celebrates doing whatever it takes to get what we want out of life. It teaches us to categorize lies into big ones and small ones. It tells us that lies are harmless if they don't affect others. But Scripture shows us a very different picture: It presents us with many situations in which a lie always affects more people than the liar intends. The lie reaches into future generations, causing division and bitterness; and it divides families and kingdoms. Here's the truth about lies, big or small: They typically stem from a lack of faith or an unrepentant heart. We tell lies and deceive people because we think there's no other way to make something happen. And we speak untruth as a way to escape consequences, failing to realize that a lie only heaps more of them on our shoulders.



# DISCUSSION

## MAIN POINT.

### JEALOUSY LEADS TO SIN READ GENESIS 25:21-26

**Jealousy and pride**  
lead us to make  
selfish decisions.

#### IF SOMEONE LEAVES AN INHERITANCE, WOULD YOU EXPECT IT TO BE EQUAL AMONG THE HEIRS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Share the context about birthrights and blessings. Even in today's culture, the oldest child is somewhat set apart. In our culture, though, parents often try to make inheritances equal among children, even setting up a will that outlines fair distribution. **When the inheritance isn't fair, it usually leads to jealousy, bitterness, and hurt feelings.**



#### THE NAME JACOB MEANS "HE GRASPS THE HEEL" OR "HE DECEIVES." WHAT DOES THIS SHOW YOU JACOB MIGHT DO?

Names were important in ancient culture: They reflected a person's character. **Jacob's name implied that he would struggle with deception, specifically with his brother.** He would constantly reach and strive for what Esau possessed, especially concerning his inheritance and his relationship with his parents.

#### WHAT DID VERSE 23 SAY WOULD HAPPEN? COULD THIS LEAD TO ANY ISSUES? EXPLAIN.

God doesn't always play by culture's rules; He isn't bound by them. **To accomplish His will, God sometimes does what's countercultural.** Genesis 25:23 says that the younger son would rule over the older son. This was unheard of in ancient culture. The oldest son had the privilege of the birthright: It was his right to inherit the role as head of household and even a double portion of the inheritance. In a sense, he would rule the family. But God had other plans for Isaac's sons. Jacob, the younger son, would rule instead. Of course, this would lead to feelings of jealousy, pride, and bitterness. Knowing this prophecy would even push Jacob to take matters into his own hands to ensure that he received what God promised. It would test the limits of brotherly love and lead to disagreement and separation.

## SIN LEADS US TO DECEIVE OTHERS

READ GENESIS 25:27-34; 27:1-19

### WHO WAS MOST AT FAULT IN THIS STORY? WHY?

Isaac potentially knew about the prophecy and chose to ignore it, giving Esau the birthright. Rebekah took matters in her own hands, or “played God” as some might call it. She manipulated her son to ensure the prophecy would come true. Esau was careless with his birthright and ignored its spiritual significance. Jacob blindly followed his mother and deceived his father and brother because “the end justified the means.” Clearly, they were all at fault. **Their actions revealed they didn’t have enough faith in God to do what He said He would do. When we don’t trust God, we take matters into our own hands as a way to control the outcome.**

### WHEN HAVE YOU CHOSEN TO LIE AND BE OKAY WITH SIN TO GET WHAT YOU WANT INSTEAD OF LETTING GOD WORK?

When we allow jealousy, pride, or doubt to take root, it leads us to sin. And often, it leads us to deceive others to get what we want. This can look like bragging and puffing ourselves up to receive accolades we don’t deserve. It can even look like exaggerating a situation to gain support or sympathy. **We really can trust God to do what He says; we really can trust Him instead of grabbing for control.**



### WHAT DOES THIS STORY SHOW US ABOUT THE TYPE OF PEOPLE GOD CHOOSES TO USE?

God doesn’t depend on us to accomplish His will; He is in total control. But in His kindness, God still chooses to use us. Isaac’s family is proof. **Despite their sin, God used them to continue the promise, which included the Messiah coming through their lineage.** God can redeem our poor choices and use us to further His kingdom.

## WRAP-UP

### HOW CAN YOU PRACTICE FAITH INSTEAD OF TAKING MATTERS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS?

It can be really difficult to trust the Lord when it doesn’t look like He’s moving—when it doesn’t look like He’s in control. We see unbelievers succeeding and seemingly flourishing, and it can often look like their way is better. Easier. So, we take matters in our own hands to achieve for ourselves what we feel God isn’t achieving for us. We attempt to force our way into beneficial situations. We force relationships that aren’t good for us so we won’t be lonely. We settle for the logical next step in life instead of seeking God’s plans for our future. And along the way, we potentially miss opportunities for our faith to grow. **When we release control and stop manipulating situations, we experience God’s faithfulness and witness His perfect sovereignty.**