



REFLECTIONS

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So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ... Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

Genesis 32:24, 26

Wrestling with Daddy

The morning sun began to rise above the horizon. It had been a long night, one Jacob would never forget. He had moved his family and possessions across the river at dusk, and in the night he found himself alone. At least he thought he was alone. He wasn't. A man was with him and a wrestling match ensued between them. They wrestled all night. It was stressful yet playful and fun. When morning came, Jacob wouldn't let the man go. He wanted the man to know how strong he had become. The Man wanted Jacob to know He was still in charge. But the wrestling match was about something more.

There was also something more when I wrestled with Daddy. My childhood memories of wrestling with Daddy are faint, but they are very warm. We didn't do it very often, and when we did it was always playful and fun. I didn't expect to win but each time was a chance to show him how strong I was becoming. As I grew stronger, it must have been of growing importance for him to show he was still in charge. But it wasn't really about that.

Wrestling with my own sons didn't happen very often either. But I wrestled each of them a few times over the years. It was pleasing to discover how strong they were becoming, yet I always let them know I was still in charge. But there was still something more important.

Wrestling with Daddy taught many things. I learned that he cared for me, that even as he prevailed over me, he would never harm me—only make me stronger. He showed me how to be a father, and how to train my own sons to be fathers when their time came along. And most important of all, I knew he loved me.

Jacob wrestled with God. I wrestled with Daddy; and my sons wrestled with me. It was all playful and fun; but it was really not about superior agility or strength. Those wrestling matches were about more than that. It was about clinging to the Father and never letting go. It was about receiving his blessing. And when the wrestling ended, there was a wonderful gift to receive—God's eternal love.

"You are the light of the world."

Richard +

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Your comments are welcomed and encouraged. Richard may be reached at richard@reflectingthesavior.org.