



REFLECTIONS

May 17, 2015

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make your paths straight.**

Proverbs 3:5-6

Wrestling with God

Don't we all do it at some time in our lives? In times of deep despair don't we find ourselves wrestling with God hoping to get our own way? Sometimes we question what God is up to. And even worse, we wonder if God is even there.

We see and read about tragedy somewhere in the world every day. Sometimes the tragedy is our own. Certainly, in those trying times we find ourselves wrestling with God. Where is God when we need him; or if God is good, why does he allow terrible things to happen? These questions about God have been asked over and over through the ages.

Maybe that's the reason Jacob wrestled with God. We are not told what prompted the engagement, but we know he lost a whole night's sleep in the tussle. Neither one gave in to the other so as morning filled the sky, God touched the socket of Jacob's hip and wrenched it. Still Jacob would not loosen his grip on God. "*I will not let you go unless you bless me,*" he declared. So God blessed him. Then God did something else—something unexpected. He changed Jacob's name. "*Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel because you have wrestled with God and man and have overcome,*" God proclaimed. Yet Jacob did not come away unscathed.

God touched the socket of Jacob's hip and wrenched it. And the resulting limp would serve as a constant reminder of the night he had wrestled with God. Jacob would always remember God's blessing and why he received it. He refused to turn loose of God until he was blessed by him. And God did bless him. God changed Jacob's name to Israel, the namesake of the great nation promised to his grandfather, Abraham.

All too often, we find ourselves wrestling with God just as Jacob did so long ago. We may wonder what God is up to sometimes, and we may even wonder if he is even there. But if we cling to him as Jacob did, his blessing will be close at hand.

Oh, we may not walk away unscathed; but whatever scar we carry away will serve as a constant reminder his blessing.

And his blessing is all we ever need.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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