

Welcome to the eighth week of
25 Weeks of Advent!

The stories of Advent all give us some insight as to the point and value of Jesus' life for us.

If Cain and Abel started “sibling rivalry”, Jacob and Esau continued the tradition of it with fervour: stolen birthrights in exchange for food, deceiving your father (with the help of your mother!) to steal your brother’s blessing as the firstborn son; and let’s throw in a death threat, for good measure.

We pick up the story of Jacob after he runs away from home: headed to Haran to hide out with Uncle Laban, Jacob stops for the night to rest. He lays a stone under his head as a pillow, falls asleep, and dreams. In his dream, Jacob sees a stairway to heaven, with angels ascending and descending. God reveals himself to Jacob as the God of his grandfather, Abraham, and father, Isaac. He reiterates the promise he gave to Abraham, that Jacob will be the father of many nations—and many people will be blessed through him. God reminds Jacob that he is always with him.

God comes to Jacob in his desperate loneliness and in the midst of chaos; God meets us where we are! Just as God reminded Jacob, God reminds us of the great plans he has for us.

Week 8: Climbing Up

Read: Genesis 28:10-22

Jacob first saw a stairway to heaven in a dream. Today, we may look at the way to heaven as a stairway or a ladder of ‘righteousness’ that we feel we ought to climb to reach God.

Do you struggle with pride? Do you fall into the pattern of thinking you are ‘one rung ahead’ of others in this journey of faith?

But Jesus isn’t sitting at the top of the ladder, waiting for us to struggle our way to the top of a never-ending, impossibly-perfect climb. Jesus isn’t waiting for us to reach heaven—to reach perfection—to reach any “level of righteousness” by which we might save ourselves and get to heaven. Jesus came to **become the ladder** (John 1:51) by which we could come to heaven at all. That climb which was impossible on our own, has become a road by which we must cling to Jesus who is the Way (John. 14:6).

Jesus has become the way for all.

Do you proclaim this message, or do you keep it to yourself?

If life is not about earning salvation by improving in righteousness, what does Jesus ask of us, clinging to him as the Way?

Not sure where to start? Try: 1 John 2:6, 1 Peter 1:13-16, Ephesians 2:8-10, Matthew 16:24-27, 28:18-20, John 13:34-35, Acts 1:8, James 1:27



Readings for your Week

*Jacob and Esau:
if they can work out their
grudges, surely so can anyone!*
Genesis 22—23

Jesus is the gate; the narrow gate
**John 10:1—18, Matt. 7:13—14,
Luke 13:22—30**

*The mission and ministry of
reconciliation is for us and others,
and us all, and God*
2 Corinthians 5:11—6:2

Remember to add this
picture to your Jesse tree!

