

Text: Genesis 25 & 27 tape#: 96-30
Topic: Marriage. Selfishness.
Series: OT School of Marriage

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Isaac & Rebekah

A Lesson in Manipulation

25:24 When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. 25 The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau. 26 After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them. 27 The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was a quiet man, staying among the tents. 28 Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

27:1 When Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak that he could no longer see, he called for Esau his older son and said to him, "My son." "Here I am," he answered. 2 Isaac said, "I am now an old man and don't know the day of my death. 3 Now then, get your weapons--your quiver and bow--and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me. 4 Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die."

5 Now Rebekah was listening as Isaac spoke to his son Esau. When Esau left for the open country to hunt game and bring it back, 6 Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "Look, I overheard your father say to your brother Esau, 7 'Bring me some game and prepare me some tasty food to eat, so that I may give you my blessing in the

1. The Anatomy of Manipulation

A. A Personal Preference or _____

B. Doing Something _____ to Get It

2. Choices for Manipulators

A. Contrive or _____

B. Selfishness or _____

presence of the Lord before I die.'
8 Now, my son, listen carefully
and do what I tell you: 9 Go out to
the flock and bring me two choice
young goats, so that I can prepare
some tasty food for your father,
just the way he likes it. 10 Then
take it to your father to eat, so
that he may give you his blessing
before he dies."

11 Jacob said to Rebekah his
mother, "But my brother Esau is a
hairy man, and I'm a man with
smooth skin. 12 What if my father
touches me? I would appear to be
tricking him and would bring
down a curse on myself rather
than a blessing." 13 His mother
said to him, "My son, let the curse
fall on me. Just do what I say; go
and get them for me." 14 So he
went and got them and brought
them to his mother, and she
prepared some tasty food, just the
way his father liked it. 15 Then
Rebekah took the best clothes of
Esau her older son, which she had
in the house, and put them on her
younger son Jacob. 16 She also
covered his hands and the smooth
part of his neck with the
goatskins. 17 Then she handed to
her son Jacob the tasty food and
the bread she had made. (NIV)

C. Pout or _____

Discussion Questions

These questions are provided for your further study and application of today's message

* NOTE: If you are single, widowed or recently divorced please take note that these biblical principles on marriage apply to most interpersonal relationships and can be helpful as you seek to apply them to your close friendship, roommates or associates. If the teaching focus on marriage for the next few weeks is difficult for you, please participate in one of the prayer or ministry opportunities that take place during the church service times. See the person at the "information booth" for more information.

1. When the average person marries in our culture there has been at least some time to determine that a majority of views, preferences, ideals, values, desires, attitudes and goals are similar, if not identical. But with each passing anniversary couples often discover a growing number of these that are also in conflict. Make a list of known preferences and desires that collide in your marriage from time to time.

*Which of these presents the biggest conflicts in your marriage?

2. Most of us manipulate our mate (at least on occasion) seeking to have things our way. There are thousands of ways we can do this, but most of us find three or four ways that "work" with our spouse. What tried and true strategies have you employed to work things out your way? Are you ready to give those up today?
3. Being born into a fallen race most of us are good at justifying our method of manipulation. We are slow to call "nagging" a sin. It is hard to consider "withholding a little information" a sin. The truth is that God says they are. Take some time right now to analyze your methods of manipulation in light of the Bible. Attempt to find verses from the Bible that speak to your particular method. (Using a concordance would be helpful for this.) For example, Rebekah deceived Isaac to get what she wanted. She then should look up verses on lying and jot them down below.
4. How well do you communicate your desires and preferences clearly to your spouse? For instance, are you prone to skip this step or do you possibly intimidate instead of communicate? What would your mate say? Can you admit that he or she may be right about this? Remember, communication is not what you think you say, it is what your mate actually hears!
5. How well do you sacrifice your desire for the sake of your spouse? How does the example of Jesus compare to your willingness to "lose" the conflict? Read again Matthew 26:36-46.
6. When love your mate by "giving in" are you prone to pout about it? Why is prayer an important substitute for this?