

A CONTRITE SPIRIT

David Wilkerson:

Why did God look so favorably upon Jacob, a deceiver? We read in Isaiah: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isaiah 57:15).

This passage describes a man who, like Jacob, is dejected, on the run, and God is reviving him, blessing him, honoring him. Isaiah adds: "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isaiah 66:2).

We know that humans consider the outward appearance, but God always looks at the heart. We can see only Jacob's covetousness, greed and manipulation. But God saw beyond his flesh and into something within his heart — a contrite, broken spirit. God knew that something in Jacob's heart was willing to be changed.

That is exactly what God is looking for in us. He looks for a broken, repentant heart He can work on. He cannot do anything with an Esau type, who takes the things of God for granted and weeps phony tears of repentance. Esau was sensual and his heart was hard. He was like many Christians today, floating through life with no purpose, wanting only to enjoy sensual pleasures along the way.

Jacob revered God's Word. How do I know this? Think about it: Jacob must have heard his father, Isaac, repeatedly tell the story of how God had made a covenant with Jacob's grandfather, Abraham. He heard of the time Isaac was laid upon the altar to be slain, but when Abraham lifted the knife, God stopped him and showed him a lamb to be used for the sacrifice. Finally, Jacob also heard of the holy seed that was to come from the patriarchal lineage.

In addition to all this, Jacob's mother probably reminded him of the dream God had given her — that Jacob would be the holy seed. Jacob must have thrilled at the thought that one day he would be the head of the clan, carrying the torch of the lineage through which the Messiah would come!