

Esau—The Apostate
Genesis 26:34 – 28:9 (Part 4)
Halifax: 27 March 2016, 10:30 AM

Introduction:

In our sermon series in the book of Genesis, we have been spending some time on the account of the family of Isaac clamouring for the blessing of God.

- Isaac and Rebekah knew that their family had been chosen to be the line through which the seed that would bring blessing to the whole world would come.
- Isaac was the son of promise, and in Genesis 25, we found Isaac and Rebekah faithfully praying that God would give them a son when Rebekah was barren.
 - And to their joy, she conceived, but there were twins in her womb and this is where the clamouring first began!
 - The commotion in her womb was so extraordinary that she inquired of the Lord about it, and He gave her an oracle in which it was declared that:
 - **Gen 25:23: Two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.**
- It seems that after this, Isaac and Rebekah did not continue in prayer.
 - Instead of rejoicing that the Messiah was to come through Jacob, the younger son, and teaching the family to give thanks with joyful expectation—
 - instead of teaching both Jacob and Esau to rejoice in the one who would come and bless them all, they began to look at the blessing in a distorted way.
 - It had been revealed to Isaac in his youth (on Mount Moriah) in a most vivid way that the blessed promised seed was destined to be the burnt offering that God required for sin and for reconciliation with Him,
 - but somehow, he began to establish an attitude in which the blessing was looked at as an exalted position and status to strive after.
- Isaac wanted Esau, the twin that was born first, to have that blessing, instead of Jacob, the one that God had chosen as revealed in the birth oracle.
 - Rebekah, on the other hand, remembering the oracle, wanted Jacob to be the one who obtained the blessing.
 - Both parents showed a decided favouritism to the son of their choice, and the result was that instead of being united in the promised blessing of Christ,
 - the whole family was found contending for the blessing.
- Jacob, at one point, had been able to play on Esau's craving for a bowl of stew in exchange for the birthright.
 - It seems that Esau had no use for the future part of the blessing but only wanted to have the position of honour and leadership in the family.
 - He was quite content to give up his birthright to Jacob, but supposed he could still have the blessing of leadership.

And it came about later on, that Isaac, ignoring the oracle,

- was so set on giving the blessing of leadership to Esau that he arranged to convey the blessing in a secret meeting with Esau, instructing him to go hunting and prepare him

a savoury feast of game such as he loved so that he could bless him in the context of a meal.

- But Rebekah overheard this and immediately employed her quick wit and strong spirit to launch a counterplan in which Isaac would give the blessing to Jacob instead.
 - Isaac was nearly blind, so she immediately instructed Jacob to go disguised as Esau so that Isaac would bless him instead of Esau.
 - She prepared a savoury meal with two young goats and prepared the disguise, and the plan was successful.
 - When Esau returned and he and Isaac realised what had happened, Isaac repented and accepted what God had purposed for the blessing,
 - but Esau was frustrated and become filled with bitterness and enmity.

Today we are going to look at Esau as a portrait of an apostate.

- Really, he is a portrait of all unbelievers, as we shall see, but an apostate is one who was born into the covenant but is cut off for his unbelief.
 - In other words, he was in the visible church, but was not among the elect of God.
- In the past we have had a sermon on each of the other members of the family I which we have seen...
 - Isaac as a portrait of a believer who wants to redirect God's blessing where God has not sent it, but who is humbled and brought to accept God's will;
 - Rebekah as a portrait of an anxious mother who believes God's promise, but does not trust God to fulfill it without her manipulation...
 - Jacob, as a portrait of a man who, like the disciples of Jesus, knows that greatness is to be found in God's kingdom through Jesus, but has to be taught that the greatness in God's kingdom is the greatness of laying down your life for the blessing of others...
 - And so now, today, we are ready to look at Esau, the apostate.

Before we launch into this, I want to first read this account to you once again.

- I will begin in Genesis 26:34...
- Here is the Word of God.

Genesis 26:34 – 28:9: When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. ³⁵ And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah. ^{27:1} Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, "My son." And he answered him, "Here I am." ² Then he said, "Behold now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. ³ Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. ⁴ And

make me savory food, such as I love, and bring *it* to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die." ⁵ Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring *it*. ⁶ So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, "Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, ⁷ 'Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.' ⁸ Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you. ⁹ Go now to the flock and bring me from there

two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. ¹⁰ Then you shall take *it* to your father, that he may eat *it*, and that he may bless you before his death.” ¹¹ And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, “Look, Esau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth-skinned man. ¹² Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.” ¹³ But his mother said to him, “*Let* your curse *be* on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me.” ¹⁴ And he went and got *them* and brought *them* to his mother, and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. ¹⁵ Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. ¹⁶ And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. ¹⁷ Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. ¹⁸ So he went to his father and said, “My father.” And he said, “Here I am. Who *are* you, my son?” ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, “I *am* Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.” ²⁰ But Isaac said to his son, “How *is it* that you have found *it* so quickly, my son?” And he said, “Because the LORD your God brought *it* to me.” ²¹ Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you *are* really my son Esau or not.” ²² So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, “The voice *is* Jacob’s voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau.” ²³ And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him. ²⁴ Then he said, “*Are* you really my son Esau?” He said, “I *am*.” ²⁵ He said, “Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son’s game, so that my soul may bless you.” So he brought *it* near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. ²⁶ Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come near now and kiss me, my son.” ²⁷ And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the

smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: “Surely, the smell of my son *is* like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed. ²⁸ Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. ²⁹ Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother’s sons bow down to you. Cursed *be* everyone who curses you, and blessed *be* those who bless you!” ³⁰ Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. ³¹ He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, “Let my father arise and eat of his son’s game, that your soul may bless me.” ³² And his father Isaac said to him, “Who *are* you?” So he said, “I *am* your son, your firstborn, Esau.” ³³ Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, “Who? Where *is* the one who hunted game and brought *it* to me? I ate all *of it* before you came, and I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed.” ³⁴ When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me—me also, O my father!” ³⁵ But he said, “Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.” ³⁶ And Esau said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!” And he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?” ³⁷ Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, “Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?” ³⁸ And Esau said to his father, “Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!” And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. ³⁹ Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: “Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. ⁴⁰ By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother;

and it shall come to pass, when you become restless, that you shall break his yoke from your neck.”⁴¹ So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”⁴² And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, “Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you *by intending* to kill you.”⁴³ Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran.⁴⁴ And stay with him a few days, until your brother’s fury turns away,⁴⁵ until your brother’s anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?”⁴⁶ And Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these *who are* the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?”^{28:1} Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of

Canaan.² Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother’s father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother’s brother.³ May God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may be an assembly of peoples;⁴ and give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and your descendants with you, that you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham.”⁵ So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.⁶ Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, *and that* as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,”⁷ and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram.⁸ Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac.⁹ So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

May the LORD bless to us the reading and now the preaching of His Word.

So again, our focus today, is on Esau the apostate.

- What do we learn about the way of an unbeliever and especially an unbelieving apostate?
- We will look at three things:
 - **First, that the unbeliever is a bundle of confused ambition.**
 - **Second that the unbeliever eventually comes to frustration.**
 - **Third that the unbeliever is full of bitterness and envy toward Christ.**
- But of course this is not just an abstract study about unbelievers.
 - We will look at how these things apply to us from a number of perspectives.
 - So let’s get started with the first point.

I. First, we see in Esau that the unbeliever is a bundle of confused ambitions.

- This is clearly seen in Esau because he is not one to hide his passions...
 - For example, it was very obvious when he wanted the lentil stew—he was not one to hide what he was thinking.
 - And so it is that we know all along what he wants regarding God’s blessing.

- A. On the one hand, we see that Esau is passionate about obtaining God’s blessing.
1. This is obvious from the way he reacts when he does not get the blessing!
 - We see how passionate he was about obtaining leadership in his household by how he reacts when he is despoiled of it...
 - How he (v. 34) **cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me—me also, O my father!”**
 - And then how he complains of Jacob (v. 36) **“Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!”**
 - And how he pleads with his father and weeps some more (v. 38) **“Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!” And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.**
 2. There is not a person in the world that does not at the bottom of them want to be blessed and happy!
 - a. It is everyone’s ambition to be blessed.
 - Not everyone wears his ambitions for everyone to see the way Esau does, but everyone wants to be blessed in the end.
 - b. People have various things that they pursue, various things they go after that they think will make them happy...
 - And they pursue whatever it is—for Esau, it was the lentil stew one day and another day it was the blessing of the firstborn in his family...
 - He wanted the position of leadership and authority in his family, and he wanted it very much.
- B. But on the other hand, he does not *really* want the blessing of this household.
1. In this household, the blessing was the blessing of bringing Jesus Christ the Messiah into the world!
 - It had been promised to Abraham that through his seed, all the families of the earth would be blessed!
 - On Mount Moriah, the Lord had shown that it would be the duty of the first born son that was to come to offer himself as a burnt offering for his household.
 - The blessing would be the greatest blessing of all—the blessing of the forgiveness of sin bringing reconciliation with God and eternal life!
 - This is a blessing that every single human being needs.
 - In fact, there is no real blessing apart from it!
 - Until your sins are forgiven, you are under the wrath and curse of God and there is nothing for you but everlasting ruin and misery.
 - There is no ultimate happiness apart from this blessing.
 - And it was promised to Isaac’s household that it would be through their offspring that this Saviour of the world would come.
 - and now it had been shown through the oracles that He would come through Jacob rather than Esau.

2. Esau should have been enamoured with this blessing!
 - In fact, everyone that knew about it should have been delighted about it!
 - a. But it is evident that Esau did not really care about this blessing.
 - 1) He showed this by selling his birthright, and saying, “What good is that to me since I am about to die?”
 - He did not see how some future coming son would have any great benefit for him when he would be dead by that time anyway...
 - He would rather have the stew—he did not care about somebody reconciling him to God after he was dead—
 - Hebrews says that he showed by this that he was a profane man—a profane man is one who has no use for the things of God.
 - 2) Esau further showed that he did not care about the promised blessing by marrying two Hittite women.
 - God had told Abraham that the Canaanites (including the Hittites) were cursed, and that in 400 years they would be destroyed.
 - Abraham had been careful to see that Isaac did not marry the women of Canaan who were under the curse of God,
 - but Esau did this without consideration—what difference would it make if God were cursing them in 400 years?
 - 3) Esau also shows that he does not care about the blessing of the Messiah when he finds out that the blessing has gone to Jacob...
 - And instead of seeking the blessing that would come through him, he asks for his own blessing!
 - But how could there be another blessing like this one?
 - We know what Esau means—he just wants leadership—
 - but the leadership of this family went with the promise of bearing the Messiah—that was the special part, and Esau did not care about that part.
 - It was foolish for him to ask for another blessing...
 - At the end of verse 29, Isaac had declared the formula that should have been well known to Esau, “**Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!**”
 - That is the truth of the Messiah!
 - If you bless Him—if you trust in Him and come to Him for the salvation that He brings, then you will be blessed!
 - But if you curse Him—if you do not submit to Him as your Lord and Messiah, then you will be cursed forever.
 - The reason is obvious!
 - He is the only One who is able (and who now has) offered Himself to take away the sin of the world.
 - If you do not come to Him, you are still under God’s wrath and curse and there is no way for you to escape...
 - no way but by coming to Him.
 - Only in Him can true blessing be found!

- b. So you see how it is that by having no interest in *this* blessing, Esau does not really want the blessing of God.
 - He does and at the same time he doesn't!
 - That is where the contradiction is found.
 - He is like the Jewish leaders in Jesus' day.
 - They wanted to be blessed in God's house in one way...
 - They wanted to have authority and respect and positions of leadership and power—they wanted to overcome the Romans.
 - But what did they think of the Messiah that God had sent to actually be the blessing of His house?
 - It was in Him the blessing of God's house was to be found.
 - In Him was light that truly reveals God—in Him was an atonement for the forgiveness of sin—in Him was eternal life—in Him was reconciliation to God...
 - but these guys were not interested.
3. This is the contradiction that is found in *all* unbelievers!
- a. You can see it in unbelieving church leaders today.
 - They want the church to flourish, they want to have high positions in the church and for the church to have influence and prosperity...
 - But when you really look at them, they do not want Christ, they do not want His true word, they do not want Him to be exalted as the one who was offered for sinners.
 - They will even deny the very gospel itself if it seems to get in the way, or they will modify His commandments or soften His judgements.
 - They want blessing in God's house, but they don't want the blessing that God gives to His house!
 - b. All unbelievers want to be blessed and happy—everyone does—
 - but they all live in God's world, and the only way for us fallen men and women to be blessed in God's world is through Jesus Christ crucified.
 - Every one that blesses Him is blessed and everyone that curses Him is cursed.
 - c. So the unbeliever is one who is looking for blessing,
 - but what he is looking for is not really a blessing because he is not looking for the only true blessing—Jesus Christ.
 - His whole life is a contradiction.
 - He runs after this and he runs after that—looking for blessing...looking for fulfillment and meaning...
 - Sometimes he is after one thing and then after another thing, but he is never headed in the right direction until he comes to Jesus Christ.
 - He will never find the blessing until he comes to Him.

TRANS> And that brings us to our next point.

II. Secondly, we see in Esau that the unbeliever always comes to frustration.

A. The moment comes when he realises that there is no blessing for him at all!

1. He comes to see that all that he has been pursuing is worthless.
 - His pursuits have gotten him nowhere.
 - We have already looked at the great despair into which Esau was brought when he realised that the blessing was entirely with Jacob!
 - But I want you to notice how pathetic he is!
 - **He cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry!**
 - He pled with his father again and again—“don’t you have at least one blessing for me?”

➤ And you must understand what is going on here.

2. Esau is a picture of a sinner on the Day of Judgment who has pursued blessing and happiness, but has not pursued Christ!

- a. He has dreamt that all would work out fine in the end.
 - But now reality has been brought to him that he has lost all and that there is nothing he can do to get it back...
 - As Hebrews 12:17 says of him, **For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.**
 - The horrible reality is that it is too late now.
 - He has missed the opportunity.
 - It is a most dreadful moment.
- b. The point is not that Esau will have no living in this world.
 - In fact, Isaac pronounces a kind of blessing on him in which he is promised that he shall live by his sword and even that there will be some back and forth with dominating Jacob over the generations.
 - But the point is that as far as the blessing that really matters—the only blessing that in the end is really a blessing—salvation in Christ...
 - Esau is entirely destitute!
 - His blessing will perish, but the blessing of Jacob will remain forever—it will bring eternal life and eternal happiness.

B. Every unbeliever will be brought to this painful point of reality eventually.

1. On the Day of Judgment, the reality of a life that has been entirely wasted will become evident to him.
 - It will be clear that he has completely missed what he really needed.
 - We watched a 1950s video the other night—and it had some fine things where a young boy was learning lessons of life—
 - of patience and steadiness in trials and of seeing a matter to the end.
 - And he was taught these lessons by a wise and noble father.

- It was not a show where everything turns out right in the end, but one where the lad has to accept his losses and broken dreams.
 - It was very different than many of the modern stories where everything turns out well and where the youth emerges with all the wisdom and his elders are shown to be fools who were holding him back.
 - But the people who did these 1950s good moral films were headed for the same frustration that Esau came to...
 - Because they were trying to live these upright lives apart from any acknowledgement of the only God and redeemer, Jesus Christ.
 - They were looking for blessing, but not from Christ.
 - In reality, our whole present society with all its problems is the fruit of the godless 1950s.
 - All the moral lessons lead only to failure and frustration if they are not rooted in Christ our Redeemer.
 - There is no hope apart from Him!
- It doesn't matter if you pursue moral blessings or riches or drugs, if you do not obtain the blessing of Jesus Christ, it all comes to the same end.
2. And very often, unbelievers have flashes of the frustration to which they are headed.
- There are those times in their lives where the light flashes into their hearts in such a way that they see that they are really headed nowhere—that it is all vanity.
 - Most of the time, they are able to suppress this light, to avoid it so that it does not trouble them...
 - There are plenty of distractions and ways to ignore it.
 - but sometimes the truth impresses itself upon them in an irresistible way.
 - In a way, that is what Esau experiences here in our text.
 - He is brought face to face with the reality that there is really nothing for him apart from the blessing that is coming to the world through Jacob—the Saviour of the world.
 - But Esau will be able to shake it off because he is a profane man.
 - He thinks the blessing is about this present world and that he will be destitute of riches and honour and power,
 - but soon he will see that he still has these and that Jacob doesn't really even have as much of these as he does...
 - So in twenty years when he meets up with Jacob, it won't really matter to him that he did not get the blessing of the firstborn.
 - He will miss the point that without what Jacob has in the promise of the Saviour, he really has no blessing at all!
 - He will live on with a relative contentment until the day that he dies in his sin—
 - And then he will be broken and frustrated all over again—and it will be far worse than it was when he was broken in our account.
 - His tears will be tears that can never be wiped away.

TRANS> So when unbelievers come to those various points of frustration and see that they are really accomplishing nothing that is worth anything,

- It is in fact a foretaste of the ultimate frustration to which they are coming if they do not repent and come to God's blessing in Jesus Christ.
- It is a dreadful prospect!

C. Can anything be done to prevent this frustration?

- Can you do anything to ensure that you do not come to this frustration from which there will be no remedy?

1. Yes! Give up on finding blessing apart from Christ!

- You need to be forgiven and reconciled to God or you can never be truly blessed.
- Repent of your sin and come to Jesus for mercy and forgiveness and life!
 - There is really only one blessing (as Isaac tells Esau) because there is only one Messiah.
 - But there is nothing keeping you from coming to Him for the blessing!
- As soon as Esau learned that the promised blessing was to come through Jacob,
 - he should have rejoiced in that God was giving such a blessing to the world, and even to his own brother!
 - He should have looked for blessing through the One who was coming through Jacob instead of continuing to seek his own separate blessing.
 - There is only one blessing because there is only one Messiah!

2. And you who know Jesus as your Saviour...it is your privilege to lead others to Christ as God's blessing for the world!

- First of all rejoice in the sure blessing that you have through Him!
 - You will not be disappointed in Jesus Christ.
 - Learn to delight in Him.
- And then do all that you can to lead others to Him.
 - You need to show them the frustration to which they are headed if they continue without Christ.
 - Help them to see that they have nothing in the end without the forgiveness of sin and eternal life.

3. My brothers and sisters, we need to pray earnestly for our LORD to wake people up before it is too late!

- The world is not going to take these things seriously unless we do.
- They are going along supposing that they will find some measure of happiness, and they have no concern...
 - but if you know the truth, it is for you to show them!

TRANS> But I am sad to say that many times when unbelievers are brought to frustration, they respond to it the way Esau did.

- Instead of repenting, they turn on Christ in hatred.
 - That is the third characteristic we see in Esau of the apostate unbeliever...

III. Thirdly, we see in Esau that the unbeliever becomes filled with bitterness and envy toward Christ.

A. Instead of coming to Jacob because that is where the blessing is, Esau hates Jacob.

- Jacob represents the whole church here...
 - In fact, in chapter 28 verse 3, it is said that he will become a great church—an assembly of peoples...
 - This is the church that will have the gospel that Esau and everybody else needs—they have Jesus Christ.
 - But Esau hates the church for this very reason—because they are the ones that have the only true blessing for him in all the world.
- 1. Look at verse 41: **So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him**
 - He should have been glad to know where God’s blessing was to be found—it was in blessing Jacob and the Seed that would come through him that he could be blessed.
 - Whoever blesses Him is blessed and whoever curses Him is cursed...
- 2. This hatred is just like the hatred of the Jewish leaders for Jesus when they saw that God’s blessing was to be found in Him.
 - They wanted to have the blessing come from them instead of from Christ.
 - So they were filled with hatred and envy when they saw Christ healing people and raising the dead and receiving honour from the people—and that God’s favour was clearly upon Him.
 - This made them angry because they wanted to have control of the blessing.
- 3. This is the very thing that stirs up hatred among people today.
 - It is okay with them if Christians want to have an optional Jesus—a Jesus who is one of many ways of blessing...
 - But as soon as we claim to serve the one true Jesus who is the only way of salvation—that is what stirs up the hatred and the division.
 - They will complain,
 - Why should all the blessing be found in Christ?
 - Why are you so narrow and arrogant?
 - Why can’t I have a blessing in my own way?
 - What’s wrong with all of these other religions and ways to God?
 - Are you trying to say that Jesus is the only way and that everyone else is condemned?
 - And the answer is *yes*, that is what I am telling you!
 - There is only one Son of God that came from heaven and died on the cross to redeem sinners.
 - Your religion and your works and your efforts are just not good enough!

- This is the thing that has always been despised about the true religion...
 - That it is the only way for sinners to find blessing.
 - It was despised in the ancient world in the time of the Old Testament.
 - It was despised in the Roman empire in the days of the early church.
 - It was despised at the time of the so-called enlightenment.
 - And it is despised today.

B. And such hatred leads to murder!

1. It is supposed, “If Jesus claims to be the only way, then He ought to be eliminated!”
 - “If His followers claim that He is the only way, then they ought to be eliminated.”
 - “They should not be allowed a voice in the public square.”
 - Some people think that modern folks would not murder over this, but that is just not true.
 - More believers have been martyred for their faith in the last hundred years than in all other centuries combined!
 - And the great offence is that He claims to be the only way!
2. You can see how the rest of verse 41 shows us that Esau wanted to murder Jacob...
 - It says, **and Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”**
 - In other words, as soon as his father died—(Esau loved his father and did not want to displease him)...
 - but as soon as he died, then he would kill Jacob...
 - because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him.
 - because this is where the blessing of God was to come from...this was where it was to be found and Esau wanted it to be somewhere else!
3. Though Esau was not able to get his hands on Jacob, he was able to get him out of his sight for twenty years!
 - Remember that you always knew what Esau was thinking, and Rebekah learned of his murderous intent and arranged to have Isaac send Jacob to Padan Aram where her family was to get a wife...
 - He needed to do that anyway...
 - But the Jews did indeed kill the Messiah Himself for this same reason—
 - this very foolish reason—because in Him was the blessing of the world!
 - They should have rejoiced and come to Him for the blessing, but instead they set out to deliver Him over to the Romans to be crucified.

C. And you know what came of this!

1. Jacob was sent to Padan Aram in a kind of death as far as his family was concerned, but he returned with his wives who were the mothers of the twelve tribes of Israel and with Judah his son who was to bring forth the promised seed.
 - It was like a resurrection—which would more fully come when God brought Israel as a nation out of Egypt...
2. But in a very literal way, the Jewish rulers did indeed deliver Christ over to be crucified and He was crucified...
 - Because He was the source of the blessing of salvation for the world;
 - and in order to procure that blessing He had to be offered up for sin on the cross.
 - He had to be cursed as the Lamb of God.
 - That is how He became the source of salvation—by giving Himself up as a burnt offering on the cross for the sins of His people.
3. And His sacrifice was fully accepted...
 - And so God raised Him from the dead and He was declared to be Lord and Christ and God has said that whosoever calls upon His name will be saved!
 - The hatred and bitterness seen in Esau and in the Jewish leaders could not thwart God's saving work.
 - They could not eliminate the One in whom God has placed His blessing for the world!
 - Not by denying Him, not by hating Him, not even by murdering Him!

Conclusion: So what should all of you do?

You should rejoice that God has put blessing in Jesus Christ!

- Don't resent Him, rejoice that there is salvation for the nations in Him—and salvation for you if you will repent and come to Him!
 - Esau blamed Jacob for stealing his birthright and his blessing—as if he would have had it if Jacob had not taken it...
 - But that was just not true.
 - The truth is that Esau did not want the blessing that God had promised—as I told you before,
 - All he wanted was the honour and position and status that came from being the head of his father's home.
 - Jacob, on the other hand, wanted the blessing of God—even though he did not understand it very well,
 - the seed of faith was in him that caused him to put himself in the Lord's hands to receive the blessing that God had for him.
- What about you?
 - Are you able to put yourself in Christ's hands for the blessing that God gives to His people? The blessing of forgiveness and eternal life?
 - If you do, you will never be brought to frustration as Esau was.
 - If you bless Jesus, you will be blessed; if you curse Him, you will be cursed as Esau was.