

The questions below are designed to be used by Saylorville Church Cell Groups as they meet during the week following the Sunday morning message at Saylorville. The intent is not for groups to answer every question, but for leaders to use the questions as a guide as they tailor the discussion to the unique needs of their group. The message and questions can be found each week at <http://www.saylorvillechurch.com/morning-sermons/>.

CONNECT WITH YOUR GROUP (10-15 MINUTES)

- What are some things/ideas/people/activities our culture tends to worship?
- How can you tell what someone is worshipping?

APPLY THE BIBLE (45-60 MINUTES)***Intro:***

- **Remember** what your group talked about last time you met. How have you changed since then?
- **Review** the notes you took on Sunday. What is **one thing** that sticks out to you about what you heard?
- **Read** the passages from Genesis 31 below together. In the message on Sunday, Pastor Pat challenged us to leave our idols and put God on the throne of our lives.

The Context:

- **Read Genesis 31:17-21** - Jacob leaves Laban, and Rachel takes her father's idols with her.
- **Read Genesis 31:30-34** - Laban chases down Jacob and searches for his idols.
- **Read Genesis 31:44-53** - Jacob and Laban make a covenant and set up stones to illustrate witnesses to their covenant. (Read the commentary paragraph on the next page for help discussing this part of the story.)

Talk About It:

This story reveals our human pattern of holding on to (Rachel), and chasing down (Laban), idols that take the place of God. But it also give us hope that we can take steps to let go and run from false gods that rule our hearts (Jacob). But how do we know who/what is ruling our hearts? How do we identify the idols in our lives? Walk through the following questions with your group:

1. Where have you struggled with disappointment or discouragement (Proverbs 13:12,19)?
2. When do you tend to experience anxiety (Matthew 6:19-34) or anger (Proverbs 11:23)?
3. Life would be all right if _____?
4. I'm willing to sin if I don't get/get to _____?
5. Christian counselors often talk about four "core idols" that dominate our hearts - power, control, approval, and comfort.
 - Which one of those speaks loudest to you?
6. John Calvin said, "Evil is not typically desiring something bad, but desiring something good too much." It's not loving a bad thing, but elevating a *good thing* to a *God thing*.
 - What actions will you take this week to keep good things from becoming idols in your life?

PRAY WITH EACH OTHER (5-15 MINUTES)

- **Read Psalm 137:4** together out loud and then pray for one another.



Genesis 31:44-53
English Standard Version Commentary

Two separate “witnesses” are set up, one by Jacob and the other by his kinsmen. Jacob uses one stone to create a pillar (v. 45), similar to what he did earlier at Bethel (28:18, 22). His kinsmen pile up stones to form a heap (31:46). The creation of two witnesses may have been intended to underline the seriousness of the oath. More likely, the two witnesses reflect in some way the deities worshiped by Jacob and Laban. Jacob’s single stone stands in marked contrast to the heap of stones set up by Laban and his relatives. ***Jacob’s monotheistic faith is set alongside the polytheism of Laban.*** Since ancient Near Eastern treaties normally involved the gods as witnesses, the treaty between Jacob and Laban also required divine witnesses. Because Jacob is not prepared to compromise his monotheistic faith, two witnesses are established.