

# Apply The Word

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## Message Info

Title:

Confirmed Through  
Conflict

Speaker:

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Scriptures:

Genesis 31:1-55

7 Lessons (Gen 31)

- 1 Expect conflict. Jealousy is a common motive
- 2 Take responsibility for yourself first
- 3 Evil men will: accuse others in any situation
- 4 ...will: flatter you to manipulate
- 5 ...will: use spirituality to manipulate
- 6 Defending yourself can be virtuous (Prov 26:4-5)
- 7 Take heart. The Lord will deliver. Trust and obey him

**CROSSWAY**  
CHURCH

**Theme:** When the Lord brings you into conflict, trust in his deliverance.

**Introduction:** Conflict is a regular feature of life in this age, and especially relational conflict. Much as we might try to avoid it, or submerge it out of mind, there is no escaping the reality of conflict. And our therapeutic age distorts the nature of conflict and the solutions that the Lord prescribes for it. Thankfully, the Bible reveals that the Lord uses conflict in the lives of his people for his good purposes.

Jacob walks through his final conflict with Laban in 4 stages:

### 1. Conflict and avoidance (1-21)

Jacob's success and blessing from the Lord aroused jealousy from Laban and his sons. Jacob tricks Laban and leaves secretly. The Lord's people can often face such opposition out of jealousy and hatred.

Jacob's life reveals how the Lord uses conflict in our lives to sanctify us (James 1:2-4). There is a kind of sanctification that only comes through suffering and trial.

### 2. Confrontation and deception (22-35)

When Laban hears of Jacob's deception, he sets out angrily to get him. But the Lord intervenes and protects his people.

Still Laban tries to manipulate Jacob through emotion, through threats, and through victimhood. Jacob does not relent, and throughout the whole encounter a line is being drawn between God's people and the world.

Rachel deceives her father and steals his household gods. Her theft was sinful whatever its motive; and the Lord uses it to demonstrate his power over the false gods. Even when we fail, he is at work.

### 2. Vindication and mediation (36-50)

After Laban's plans and pleas are thwarted, the tables turn. Jacob is the aggrieved party, and he confronts and berates Laban. He also makes clear that though Laban swindled him, the Lord always looked out for him.

Laban turns down every chance to respond rightly to the Lord, and persists in his hardness. He enacts a pragmatic covenant with Jacob to try to protect himself, and continues to protest that his motives are good.

### 4. Conciliation and separation (51-55)

As they part, the separate identities of Jacob and Laban are confirmed. Laban returns to his home and pagan gods. Jacob returns to his home and God.

**Questions:**

1. What conflicts are you currently facing?
2. Are you trusting the Lord through your conflicts?
3. How is the Lord at work to sanctify you in your conflicts?