

LESSON ONE: HANG A FACE ON IT

Tex Sample has been described as a man with a baseball in one hand and a copy of the philosopher Wigenstein in the other. He was born in the South, academically trained in the Northeast, and has grown to maturity in the Midwest. He is a Pastor who is as at home with a group of tough urban Job Corps participants as he is with a group of white suburban Sunday School class or with a group of distressed heartland farmers. To say he is down to earth is an understatement. He has described people in the South as finding it difficult to understand a concept or a personality until they are able to hang a face on it. Hanging a face on something makes it tangible. Hanging a face on someone makes him or her identifiable and approachable.

PRAY: Dear Lord Jesus, help us to seek Your face always and in all ways. Send us Your Holy Spirit through our involvement in this study. Empower and equip us to be people who are driven by Your love. Help us to be people who let their light shine before others so they can see the good that we do and give glory to You and Your Father. In Your Name we pray. Amen.

INTRODUCTION: The popular Gospel group, *The Florida Boys*, has a hit whose title is, “If You’re Happy, Notify Your Face.” It goes like this, “If you’re happy, notify your face, Take that frown off and put a smile in its place; If you love Jesus, well, show it to the human race, If you’re happy, notify your face. I go to many meetings, see Christians everywhere, We sing and talk of Jesus and how it will be up there; We talk of all the burdens confronting the human race, And say our Jesus is the answer with a frown all over our face. We claim we’ve got the answer to everything that’s wrong, Then sit in church impatiently when services take too long; Then we go out into the world with faces sad and mean, No wonder folks won’t listen that Jesus is supreme.”
—Words and Music by Gary S. Paxton, Beasley & Baker Publications.

BIBLE BASE: Read Genesis 33:1-17.

DISCUSS: (The following questions are for discussion. You may fill in the answers in the space provided.)

Why did Jacob arrange his family in the order in which he did?

Do you think Jacob was surprised at the way Esau greeted him?

Why did Esau run to meet Jacob?

Why did Esau ask Jacob who all the people were who accompanied him?

How did Jacob hang a different face on Esau?

How did Jacob demonstrate his absolute trust in God?

What further proof did Jacob give of his trust in God?

Do you think that Esau hung a different face on Jacob?

CHALLENGE: Have you ever had to re-hang a face on someone for whom you felt some animosity? Try to hang a different face on someone that you might currently misunderstand.

CLOSING THOUGHTS: “Are you ready to rip the face off this place?” screams the lead singer of Pillar. A hyped-up crowd of teens—6000 strong — goes nuts. The aggressive rap–rock band launches into a pummeling kickoff number, the surly singer pounding the stage with his steel-toed boot, sweating right through his baggy Army fatigues and black bandanna. He gestures like a member of some vicious street gang as he screams and roars into the mike, his arms swinging low as if on the way to the requisite crotch grab. This crude move, as integral to rap–rock as the blown kiss is to a lounge act, is usually accompanied by a testosterone explosion of expletives. The singer’s hand slaps down hard on his thigh—and stays there. Gripping his pants leg with conviction, he screams, “Jesus Christ!” Pause. “Is He in your heart?”

It’s time to wreak havoc and give praise at Festival Con Dios, the first Christian alternative-rock tour. This is the sanctified answer to hedonistic summer blowouts like Lollapalooza and Ozzfest, an extravaganza where amped-up rock ‘n’ roll meets tamped-down self-control.

—Lorraine Ali, “The glorious rise of Christian pop,” *Newsweek*, July 16, 2001, 40.

CLOSING PRAYER: Father in heaven, we thank You for Your love. You displayed that love to us in the face of Jesus who sustains us. Help us to display that love so others can see it in our faces. Help us also to hang the best face possible on those we encounter as well as those we have known for years. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen.