

Esau gave up his birthright to satisfy his selfish desire. He gave his immediate hunger priority over the long term relationship that was represented by the position of the firstborn. It was just too easy to give up, so he must not have cared very much about it. Until later, that is. By then it was too late.

I imagine that Esau claimed that he had been terribly ripped off; I imagine that he demanded justice! But it was really his own decision, and his own fault. It is a little ridiculous to demand the return of something that was given up willingly.

Some people treat their own family with the same contempt. They give up their responsibility to their spouse or children because they would rather be free to pursue their own interests. Divorce only bothers them because of the way it looks to others; they are internally glad to let someone else do all of the work of keeping what's left of the family going. The remaining spouse has full-time responsibility.

Many times the non-custodial parent will not make the commitment to take some of the responsibility (i.e., their kids) on a consistent basis. They do not have the children every other weekend, for instance, but only when it is convenient to their schedule. In this case, the custodial spouse cannot plan anything which allows them to have a bit of time on their own.

Yet when important decisions are made about the visible aspects of the children's lives, suddenly there is a flurry of activity. "Why was I not involved in this decision?" may be the question. The real answer to this question is, "You relinquished your rights! You sold your birthright, just like Esau. You didn't want custody of your children; you have shown by your inconsistency that they are not a priority in your life, and now they are used to you not being intimately involved."

It's amazing that kids are not really fooled very often. They know whether they are important in someone's life. Even if they are given some time by a parent, they know if what they want to do is given any weight. Quality time is not shown by dragging them around to places where they don't want to go. Yet that is what is given to them by 'Esau'.

Relationships are so very important! There must be a strong commitment to involvement. We cannot play at it. We cannot just give an effort when it is convenient to us. If we do, then we will begin to wonder why our company isn't desired any more.

The church is not immune to this problem, either. God speaks in many places of His disgust for sacrifices which have no meaning because they represent what the offerer wanted to give. A lamb that was blemished was not accepted in ancient times and similar worship will be rejected just as forcibly today. The lukewarm will be rejected violently. Remember that David would not give to God that which cost him nothing. So should we be careful not to give up our birthright, but cling with all of our strength to the relationship that God, our Father, offers us.