***Gen 25:29-34 Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. 30And Esau said to Jacob, “Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary.” Therefore his name was called Edom. 31But Jacob said, “Sell me your birthright as of this day.” 32And Esau said, “Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?” 33Then Jacob said, “Swear to me as of this day.” So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.***

Thus Esau despised his birthright. Thus Esau… despised… his birthright. Thus Esau despised his…. Birthright. What is a birthright? Well, it’s many things and not all of them are clear. Basically, it’s a special privilege belonging to the first-born son. Based on order of birth come advantages. The Jews attached importance to the first born, the first begotten son. By virtue of birth order, he became the priest of the family when his father passed and inherited the leadership authority of the family. He received a double portion of inheritance and generally received the blessing of his father. This was believed, in Jewish society, to place him in covenant relationship with God. Birthright was a big deal, something to be valued, cherished, anticipated. Esau despised his birthright.

Christians have a birthright. 2 Corinthians 3:17 *Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.* Through faith in Jesus Christ, we have a birthright – liberty, freedom from the fear of everlasting death, joy, peace – gifts that Christ gave us. I want to ask this question today – are we despising our birthright? Colossians 3:1-2 *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.* When we allow the things of this world be our mindset and we do not set our mind on the things above, aren’t we being just like Esau, despising our birthright, with little more to show for it than a little bread and some lentil soup? Jesus has given us a birthright – the right to be priest, to inherit a place with the Father, a covenant relationship with God. Are we despising our birthright?

Verses 29 & 30 *Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. 30And Esau said to Jacob, “Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary.” Therefore his name was called Edom.* Nothing mysterious here. Esau comes in from the field, tired, hungry, smells something good cooking and asks. We know he is a hairy man, with red hair and red skin. Edom means red or rosy. Hebrews 12:16 describes Esau as a profane man, meaning a godless man.

Verses 31 & 32 *But Jacob said, “Sell me your birthright as of this day.” 32And Esau said, “Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?”* The birthright – the doorway to covenant with God – sell me your covenant with God – the careless reply – I am willing to sacrifice the eternal blessings of God for the temporary things of this world – so what is this birthright to me?

The world wants us to sell our birthright – isn’t that what Satan tried with Jesus – Make these stones bread, the angels will bear You up if You leap, kneel to me and I will give you the kingdoms of the world. Give me Your birthright. The world is saying the same to us, and many spend all day selling their birthright – the birthright of joy, peace, and liberty in Jesus – not maliciously – they don’t wake up and say, “I think I’ll sell my birthright today”, but carelessly – not all at once, but through general neglect, day on day.

Verses 33 & 34 *Then Jacob said, “Swear to me as of this day.” So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.* Notice the birthright passes not by way of violence, but by way of carelessness, thoughtlessness, neglect… a plate of lentils in place of a covenant with God. Thus Esau despised, showed contempt for, his birthright and all the value it held.

Our birthright passes not by way of violence, but by way of distraction. Moses asks in Psalm 90 - *So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.* Hour by hour, do we despise the birthright Jesus made possible? Romans 6:4*Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* Newness of life brings a birthright.

This week – how will we honor our birthright? How will we value the liberty and freedom from fear that Jesus brought, the Joy we have, the Peace that He gives to us? Will we despise it through distraction, looking at all the things of this world and never casting more than a passing glance on the things above? Will we treat it carelessly? Or will we cherish it? Will we trade it for the passing pleasures of this world? Or will we instead focus on laying up eternal treasure in heaven? Carelessness costs… The exchange between Jacob and Esau probably lasted one minute… the impact is eternal. As we celebrate Communion this morning, let’s remind ourselves of the birthright we have and commit to cherishing it one breath to the next.