

Numbers 13

Sunday 7/8/2012

Well, hello. I would like to thank everyone for your hospitality. I have never been treated to such good hospitality in my life; you are really spoiling me. I thank everyone for the friendships, for the fellowship, and for how we have been treated. It has been nice. I thank you for my wife and I thank you for me. Praise God you are here.

It is always interesting how I do not know you, and many of you do not know me, yet you come here, meet, and really hit things off with some people. You sit next to people, hang out, and have good, sweet fellowship. That is only possible through Jesus Christ. I did not come here knowing anything; we have one thing in common, and that is Jesus Christ. It is amazing how something so seemingly small is something so huge. People talk about world peace and getting everybody together, but you are only going to have that in Jesus Christ. That is why it is going to be a mess until He sets things up.

I. Introduction to Caleb and the Spies

If you have your Bibles, please turn to the book of Numbers chapter 13. We are going to look at a very significant guy, and his name is Caleb. This is a unique perspective; I got this a few years ago when I saw Caleb in a different light than I had seen him before. Usually, he is in the background of the story, but I am putting him in the foreground because I think he is the guy we need to look to here. The title of the message is "Not Now But Later."

To give you some background on the story, Joshua and Caleb and ten other people—one representative from each of the twelve tribes of Israel—were chosen and told, "You need to go up to the Promised Land to scout things out." This was a scouting party. The people of Israel had just come out of Egypt; they had gotten the law. Now, the next step was to go into the Promised Land, so they were sending out a scouting party. This is their report. They went up there, checked things out, and came back. Where we are going to pick up in Numbers 13:26 is the story of their report. They went up there, checked things out, and came back.

And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.

And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

So they came back with a good report and said, "Hey, this land is above and beyond anything you could imagine."

But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Let us go to the Lord in prayer.

Lord, we thank You for being so good to us. We ask Your blessing on this message. We ask that the preaching would go out and that You would use it to convict hearts and to change lives. Lord, I pray that You help me to say what needs to be said and the way it needs to be said. We trust You to do Your part, and You always do, Lord. When there is a letdown in anything, it is always on us, God. But we thank You for having grace on sinful people. We thank You for coming down and having Jesus Christ die on Calvary's cross that we could have life. We just thank You for being so good. We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.

II. Caleb's Fearlessness

Now we are going to look at the person whom I consider to be the most important person in this story. When I was reading, I started in verse 26 and skipped a big section. I did not realize that sometimes happens when you look up and then down, and your whole page shifts. I jumped from verse 28 to 31. So let me read verses 28 through 30.

Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.

The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

Without that section, I do not have a message because it is on Caleb. Caleb stilled the people; that is the person we are going to look at. We are going to look at Caleb's impact and Caleb's influence to still the people. Caleb stood up and stilled the people.

The first thing we are going to look at about Caleb is that he was fearless. He stilled the people. The people came up and said, "Hey, this place is big, it is scary. There are big people there, and we are not able to. We are in our own sight as grasshoppers." That is how they viewed themselves. And Caleb said, "All right, let us go." Everybody was kind of taken aback, thinking, "But did you not hear what we said?" Caleb was totally fearless.

There is an expression called "fear is epidemic," which means fear is contagious. That is true. Have you ever had somebody get really scared, and then you get scared? Why? Because they are freaking you out. That is what happens here. Fear is epidemic. This message has a real battle aspect to it because Caleb is a man of war. No place is fear more epidemic than on a battlefield.

When you are told to hold the line, and it is a strong line, if three people take off, you now have three openings, and they run. If two of those three people were on each side of you, you are not covered. So what are you going to want to do? You will want to get out of there because you are not covered. You might yell at the guy back there, but what happens is you get afraid because fear is epidemic.

No place was this more prevalent than World War I, where men had to be so courageous to stand up and walk or run across a battlefield with fire coming their way. They were trying to stay equal distances apart to give them more targets to shoot at instead of just staying in a big bundle. To help with the fear, the English came up with an idea. When they would go over the top, they would throw a soccer ball up. The rule was you were not supposed to chase the soccer ball, but you were supposed to just keep kicking it if it came to you. So here they were with their full packs, running and almost making a game out of it as they were dying. Why? To keep their minds away from the fact that they were getting slaughtered, to help alleviate that fear. That is an interesting thing they did. Sometimes, when you get afraid, you do have to think of other things and take some rest in the Word of God.

Turn over to Numbers chapter 14. We are going to pick up a little more of the story here.

And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes.

Joshua stands up. Joshua is the person we think of: Joshua and Caleb. They stood up; they were the two that did not go along with the crowd. But Joshua stood up in Numbers chapter 14. Caleb stood up by himself in Numbers chapter 13. Pay attention to that. Joshua becomes the guy in the next book after Moses leaves. But right here, at this time, Caleb stilled the people in Numbers 13:30. He stilled the people and said, "Let us go." Now, in Numbers chapter 14, it is two people standing up: Joshua and Caleb.

We are going to look at a little bit of Caleb's mentions throughout the first five books of the Bible. In Numbers 14:24, he is mentioned again. What is going on is that since they refused to go up, God said, "You are not going up now for forty years. I am going to wipe out this group that was causing all these troubles and would not go up, except for Joshua and except for Caleb." That is what they are being told here.

But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.

Now come over to Numbers 14:38.

But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still.

Notice that first it is just Caleb mentioned, then it is Caleb and Joshua mentioned. Caleb was the man who was fearless. Caleb was the frontrunner and fearless. He did not fear the children of Anak, and he did not fear the people of Israel. Sometimes you can fear your enemies but fear your friends, and vice versa. That is one of the things you see, especially since the Bible issue

has been talked about a little bit here in the last few days. You can have these big, strong men of God who will stand up and kick neo-orthodoxy, and kick this and kick that, and preach against sin and do all that. But when it comes to their peers and their peers' opinions about the Bible, they will cower. That was not Caleb. If you are not afraid of things out there, you should not be afraid of things in here. You should not be a man-pleaser and tell them what they want to hear just because they are your friend and you do not want to hurt their feelings. That was Caleb; he did not fear the people at all, and he did not fear the enemy at all.

The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.

Those are two good verses that tell you not to be afraid. God is with you. There is the expression, "One man and God is a majority." As long as God is with what you are doing, there is no need to be afraid. I can stand up here and talk big, but it is not as easy to put into practice as it is to just run your mouth. There have been times in my life where I can say, "Man, how in the world did I get through that?" Hopefully, there have been some times in each and every one of your lives where you look back and think, "How did I make it? How did I get through that? How was I not...?" The only answer you have is God. God was there for you. That has to do with being fearless, but you have to be willing to take that step. Caleb knew, "Hey, God said He is going to take us up, so let us go. What is the problem?" The other people forgot what God had told them, and that was the issue. They forgot it, and they were afraid. Why? Because they looked at the circumstances around them and said, "These people are big." Now they are giants; they are literally physically giants.

Caleb saw the same thing later with David and Goliath. Everybody was afraid of this giant. David was like, "Just go kill him." They were like, "Have you seen him? We are like grass in our own sight; we are like grasshoppers." David said, "Okay, let us go. Just go kill him." They said, "Well, it is easy for you to say; you are not even out here fighting." David said, "Okay, I will go fight him." When somebody is fearless, why is it there are always these small people that are fearless? I remember back in the old days, you would be out, and it was the little guy picking the fights. It is the little guys that... when you get big, you can kind of get a pass on that because people are kind of afraid of you, even though there is really no reason to, because if you cannot fight, it does not really matter. But the little guys, they are the fearless guys who will just jump in. Then you have to follow them because you have to save them from getting killed most of the time because God is not in that. But God was in this, and Caleb was probably a little guy. I bet he was, just like David, and they jumped right into that.

I like looking at fearless people throughout history. I really like it. That is why I read some of the things I really like reading about: World War I, church history, and boxing. I like these fearless people, and I like to think about these things. Why? It just appeals to me. Maybe because I am trying to compensate for lacking it, I do not know. But that is what I like. One of my favorite people when I think of a fearless person is a guy named Martin Luther. Martin Luther was fearless. If he ever had any fear, I have never seen it.

I have a story here about Luther's speech at the Diet of Worms. When you first read that, you might think, "Oh, they fed him worms." No, Worms is the name of the city he went to. What was going on is Luther had written some books. The powers that be of that day, which were the Roman Catholic Church and the Empire, called him to account and said, "You are going to come down here, buddy, and you are going to stand before everybody, and you are going to give account for what you have written." Luther came up, and you always hear the big, bold stories of Luther, but this shows what it took to get there.

Luther was apparently overawed by the august assembly, nervously excited, and unprepared for a summary condemnation without an examination. Many thought he was about to collapse. So here came Luther before this great crowd, and he choked. He fell apart, and many people thought he was going to pass out. Then he asked for further time. He said, "Please, can I have another day?" They granted him a respite of one day. This was a very difficult time. People on the scene said, "Oh, that heretical fool," talking about Luther. He entered laughing and left despondent after this. Even among his sympathizers, some now regarded him as a fool, while many looked upon him as a saint for the Holy Spirit. In any case, he had lost much of his reputation. So here came this big, bold guy with this huge reputation, Martin Luther. It would have been a sad day to see this great man folding under the pressure.

But it is a good thing; I am thankful that the story did not end right there. Because in that day off, Luther recollected himself and wrote to a friend, "I shall not retract one iota, so Christ help me." The next day, he appeared a second time, and the narration of it said it was the greatest day in his life. He never appeared more heroic and sublime. He never represented a principle of more vital and general importance to Christendom. When he showed up, they made him stay outside and wait outside the assembly for two hours, just putting the pressure on him, trying to make him collapse again. He had fortified himself by prayer and meditation and was ready to risk life itself for his honest conviction of divine truth.

Then they came in and said, "Are you willing to acknowledge that you wrote these books?" After yesterday, here he was, a weak man, a guy who was trembling and almost ready to pass out. Luther stood up and said, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" If his opponents could convict him of error by prophetic or evangelical scriptures, he would revoke his books and be the first to commit them to the flames. He concluded with a warning to the young emperor not to begin his reign by condemning the Word of God. He said:

Unless I am refuted and convicted by testimonies of the Scripture or by clear arguments (since I believe neither the Pope nor the councils alone, it being evident that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am conquered by the Holy Spirit, quoted by me in my conscience as bound in the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is unsafe and dangerous to do anything against the conscience.

Then he said his famous line, "Here I stand, God help me, amen." So here you had a man that cowered the day before, and then he went and he prayed and he spent time with God. Then he stood before that crowd and said, "You want to prove me wrong? You use this book." He stood on it in one of the boldest stances in history, where it was man against the whole world, and the

world cowered. They did not know what to do with Luther. Luther said, "My books I wrote against you are based on this book. If you want me to recant, you prove it wrong here, and I will recant. If not, shut up." That is fearless.

That is your heritage. That is one of the people who was responsible for keeping God's Word going. He took that Bible and translated it into the language of the common man, that common German man at that time. That was a fearless man who did that. There are all kinds of fearless people throughout history, and you could all pick your favorites, I am sure, if you know anything about it.

A lot of times, God will call you to do things out of the norm. Why? There are plenty of normal Christians. Being abnormal is sometimes what it takes. Hooking a grill up to a truck and pulling it downtown to feed a bunch of society's outcasts, that is not normal. I take that back. It is normal if you are doing it for the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man and "let us make a difference" and all that. But if you are doing it for the sole purpose of gaining some credibility to give somebody a tract, and now the guy may actually read it, or now the guy may actually listen to you when you try and tell him about Jesus Christ, how He died, was buried, and rose again for you—that little bit of credibility you have now, maybe they will listen, maybe they will get saved. That is kind of weird. Why is not everybody doing that? Well, why should they? It is abnormal.

I am hearing about this; I am talking to the brother here who is putting grills together and hot dogs and hamburgers and just giving them to people. The sole purpose of giving it to them is to be able to witness, to be able to give them a gospel tract, to be able to take care of somebody who needs it. I am saying that is very abnormal because most of the converts that come as a result of that are never going to put a dime in the plate here. Most of them probably will not even come here because it is across town, and they might not have transportation. So why go through that effort to do that when there is nothing in it for you? That is normal. You try and reach people; you want to have a ministry to the bankers, you want to have a ministry to the rich. Why? Because they will come and they will fill your coffers, and you will get a big building, and big buildings and lots of stuff are fun. So that is the main purpose.

Here these people are; they are never going to put a dime in. They are never going to offer anything. So what is the purpose? I will tell you the purpose: you may never see them in this building, but I will tell you what, you will see them in the streets of glory, and you will have somebody that is thankful and is going to say, "Without you, I would have been in hell." It is not going to be about buildings, and it is not going to be about how you can help us. It is going to be about, "I once was lost, but now I am found." Without you, I would not have known Jesus Christ; without you actually caring for my soul. There is an old poem, and the end of it is, "But no man cared for my soul." Somebody caring for a soul to go through that effort just to go there. I am sure you get that a lot. "Why are you here?"

It is different when you get that. There are so many programs and everything, and it is a false friendliness. It is a "I am doing my community service. I try to do a good deed every day because I think that if you do a good deed every day, God will look for everybody." It is different when

you are doing it for Jesus. There is just something different about it, and people will notice that and know, "Why exactly are you here?" Let me tell you why I am here: I am here because of Jesus Christ. That is it. Jesus Christ pulled me out of a pit, and now He can pull you out of a pit. You still might be homeless tomorrow, but you are not going to be homeless eternally. That is a good thing. They are never going to come here. But you will spend eternity with them. Praise God for that, and they will be thankful for that. You will have something to scream and shout about and praise God about for all eternity, and God is getting glory out of that, and people are getting saved out of that. So do not get bent out of shape, whoever does the books, and think, "Man, how do you get through it?" God will provide. God has taken you this far, right? Do not worry about it. That is Caleb. Caleb was fearless.

III. Caleb's Faithfulness

The second thing we want to look at about Caleb is that he was faithful. After this initial big event where Caleb stood up and was the man, Caleb pretty much disappears for forty years. We do not know anything of him. I am going to give you two mentions of Caleb here.

Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,

Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

That is one mention of Caleb after this big event, and he is mentioned as being recollected. He followed, except Caleb first, Joshua second. Then he is mentioned again in Deuteronomy 1:36.

Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD.

That is Caleb. Now, where was Caleb?

Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

That is why you cannot find him; he is being faithful. Think about this: we see Caleb disappear from the scriptures for forty years. What happens during this time? Moses is leading them through the wilderness, and God raises up a successor to Moses, and who is it? It is Joshua, not Caleb. You know, that might be a little hard to deal with from Caleb's standpoint, or if that was me. Caleb obviously handled it well. We have all kinds of people popping up during these forty years. We have people rising up in rebellion, all these prominent people saying, "Hey, let us go back to Egypt. Why are you in charge, Moses? Let one of us be in charge." God is killing them left and right, and there is rebellion going on here, but you never see Caleb's name mentioned in it. If you want to get technical, Caleb would be the only one who could stand up and say, "Hey, remember me? I did this." But he never did. He never was discouraged about his position in all this. God raises up Joshua to become the successor to Moses. Remember, there is a part in there where Moses is in the tabernacle, Moses and Joshua leave, and Joshua stays. Where is Caleb? Probably back at his tent. You never saw Caleb go, "But hey, remember me? Joshua followed my lead. I was the big man who stood up. How come I am not the second in command?" Because he

was faithful. It was not about pecking order; it was about doing what God wanted him to do, not what God wanted Moses to do. He could have been jealous and bitter about Joshua getting the prominent role because he spoke up before it. He was faithful as can be.

Back to the war stories. There is a story in Stalingrad I read a while back, which was a horrible battle in Russia in World War II where the Germans just got slaughtered. I was reading this guy's account of it, and he said, "We were down to pistols. We had no ammo. We had no grenades. We had nothing." He described it as, "We were told not to surrender." They were standing there, and the Russian tanks came and surrounded them. A Russian popped up out of there and said, "German soldiers, come, Hitler, kaput." This guy, the way he described it, said, "Out of us little, small, ragtag bag of people that was left, out flies a Molotov cocktail onto that tank." He said, "Just his words were, 'Our fate had been set in motion.'" Basically, what he meant is that thing went down and just killed them all. This guy made it, one of the few who made it. But that is faithful.

What is sad, and I like reading these World War II, World War I soldier accounts, there is another account of a wounded Russian or German soldier where he is banged up and has his hand in a sling, and they said, "You know, put your hands up. You are done." He goes, and they just... what a stupid thing. But man, what morale. You read that stuff and you go, "Well, but he was fighting for a demon-possessed leader." Yeah. How about that? And yet he was that faithful, faithful unto death, to where his life did not mean anything. Only the fatherland, only the Führer. Everything, "I am giving it all for him." How does an unsaved man do that for his false, phony Messiah when we cannot do anything for ours? How? It is awful pathetic, though, is it not? You ought to get convicted. I read that stuff, and I get convicted about it. I get convicted about what? Because I will not even go to those lengths for Jesus Christ. Of course, I have never been called and had machine guns put on me, so you do not know what is going to happen. Hopefully, God will give you the courage to stand up. But what about sometimes opening your mouth? "I am afraid they might say something. I do not want to look awkward."

I am a real bad one for this because, as far as I am concerned, one of the greatest inventions ever is the little charge card things on the gas pump. Why? Because I do not want to talk to anybody. I want to go get my gas. I want to put my card in. I want to leave without talking to anybody. Why? Because I do not want to talk to anybody. I am on the go. I am here, and this is where I am going. I have a problem with this sometimes: walking, I am doing something, and they are "Hi, hi, hi," and all this stuff is going on around me. "Hey, I said hi to you, and you just totally snubbed me." Sorry, I did not see you; I was zoned in. I was doing my own thing. That is one of the problems I have. But maybe I should go in just to go, "Hey, can I give you some good news today?" Be faithful to God instead of just, "Let me get in and get out. I do not want that hassle. I do not want that problem." Well, maybe that is somebody's soul who needs that.

There have been times I have talked to people, and it was like, "Wow, that just happened at just the right time." I was in a prison here a few years ago down in Florida, and we preach in these big prisons, the small prisons. This was one, and I am in one, and I am upstairs, another guy is downstairs, and we were told, "Hey, that is it, time to go." "Well, okay, I have to go tell my guy downstairs. We will be there in a minute." I go tell him, we still had a couple of minutes, and I

look over, and in this cell, we have a big door and a window about that big by about that big. In that door is just a guy, and he has his head leaning up on it. He is the most pathetic-looking creature you have ever seen. I went over to him and said, "Are you all right?" He said, "Huh?" He said, "I just got back in here. I have been in Q dorm." That was the name of it. He is like, "I just came back from Q dorm," and Q dorm is the loony bin. I said, "What were you doing over there?" He said, "Well, I tried to kill myself." I do not remember if he tried to hang himself or what he tried to do, but they saved his life before he died. I said, "Why did you do that?" He said, "I cannot take it anymore. I just cannot take living out the rest of my life in here." I said, "Well, I understand. I understand. Let me ask you something. If they had not saved your life, where would you be right now?" He said, "I would be in hell." I said, "That is right. Would you like to know how to get out?" I will tell you what, I thank God that I was able to give him the gospel so compact and so concise. But within two minutes, that guy was praying and asking the Lord to save his soul from hell.

This guy, you know, a lot of times you do not think your little things you do will make any difference. What made a difference to this guy, I hope it made the difference to help him to be able to make it. I do not know, maybe he hung himself. I do not know what happened. But I know just because of a little concern for some poor, pathetic soul over there, that man passed from death to life. Just one thing, one person. There are people out there that you can reach. I cannot. Your pastor cannot. Why? Because you are in the place to do it. You are the person that has to make up the hedge and stand in the gap, just like we had before. The line, hold the line. Each time somebody goes back, they leave an opening. That means there are fewer people up here with more things to do. The way Christianity is going, it is really nothing but holes now. There is a handful of people out there trying to go, "Hey, hey." That is why you will see people, sometimes maybe people around here, and it is like, "Wow, this guy does so much." Yes, you know why? Because there may be nobody else that will. Maybe help them out a little bit.

There is another group here that I get a kick out of, these faithful men called Gurkhas. They are these little soldiers, little short people. They are little short mountain people. They lived in the mountains between India and Nepal. They are called Gurkhas. They gave the English such a hard time when England was taking over everybody. They could not take these Gurkhas. As a result, the Gurkhas ended up becoming their allies and fighting for them and everything. Little short people, but they are the most fierce warriors you have ever seen. They had those knives, those knives that came out and were bent forward like that, those Gurkha knives. These people had a motto, and it said, "It is better to die than to be a coward." These were some of the most honest, and you could trust them, and they are amazing. They are really characters too.

There is one story about them where they are trying to teach them to parachute. Here the guy is in the... well, the Gurkha did not know that, but the British soldier knew that is what he was taking them up there for. They said, "All right, we are going to jump at this many feet." And the guy is like, "Can you get the plane down a little lower?" "No, because we will crash." Or, "No," he said, "the chutes will not open." He is like, "What are chutes?" This guy was going to jump out of the plane. He knew he would not make it, but that is why he is saying, "Can you get a little

lower?" That is a faithful man. That would be crazy enough to jump out of an airplane. Why? Because he had a sense of duty.

These guys were so crazy that they were told, "Do not lose your rifle under any circumstance." They took that to these crazy extremes. There is a story of him going across the bridge and a guy falling off the bridge into the water, and he did not come up. Somebody jumped in, about drowning both. Why? Because this guy is trying to hang onto his rifle, and he will not even swim to the surface. Somebody had to drag him up. Another one is, there is a battle going on, and a British soldier gets hit out there, and his rifle goes here, and he is pinned down. So you have a British guy that ran out there and grabbed the guy, and he dragged him to safety. Right behind him is a Gurkha running out there and grabbing the guy's rifle and coming back. I mean, he is risking his life to save the guy's rifle, but that was how they are. They were faithful. They were dedicated. These unsaved pagans up in Northern India, Nepal, had more faithfulness than we will have a lot of times. For what? Sense of duty? Nothing more?

The mission field is like that, and most ministries are like that. You have to be faithful for your sense of duty. You have to be faithful for Jesus Christ and for the person next to you. Right here, I can tell, just in the people I am hanging out with, there is a lot of closeness here. It is a very, very homey place. It is very close. We are tight around here. So why are you doing something? You are doing it for your brother next to you, and you are doing it for Jesus Christ. Remember that sometimes when you want to bellyache and complain. Are you doing it for you? Are you doing it to bring glory to yourself? Are you doing it for your Savior? Think of that. Many times you will have little support. But like I said before, one man and God is a majority.

Are you prepared to be faithful when you are called on to do something? Like Caleb, we did not hear from him for forty years while he was busy being faithful where he was, where he was needed. How about you all? This is your first Sunday here; I am not calling on you to go to the mission field by any means. You are new. You have been here, sit here, soak up the preaching, learn the Bible and all that. Some of you have been sliding probably for too long. Man, you have been here for, you know, they are doing a nine-year thing. Maybe you have been here for eight of those nine years, and you have not lifted your finger to help out yet. Come on, man, grow up. Become faithful. Maybe you are not dependable, and people will not ask you to do anything because you drop the ball every time they do. How about taking a step in faithfulness? How about taking one step and trying to go a little farther than you were before and becoming reliable? You do not want to get a bad reputation for being a bum, for being somebody who you cannot depend on, being an undependable person. That is why a lot of times you will see these certain people, and they are always doing everything. It is, "Well, you know you can depend on them. If I talk to this guy, he will get it done." It is easy to just say, "Hey, have them do it." How about you? Right, you, you, you, you, you. Take that step up in faithfulness. Are you prepared to be faithful where you are or maybe called to be? Be faithful where you are, but be prepared, be willing to just labor for the sake of Jesus Christ and no one else. Remember about the Pharisees, Jesus Christ said, "For they love the praise of men more than the praise of God." Now it is nice to get a pat on the back for what you are doing, but do not count on it. Do not live for that. When

that happens to me, you know what happens? I get nervous. I am looking for somebody to stick a knife in my back, not pat me on the back. Do not do it to be seen. Do it for Jesus Christ.

IV. Caleb's Preparation and Patience

Now the last thing we are going to come to is Joshua chapter 14. Go to Joshua chapter 14. As our forty years are going by, all of a sudden, up pops Caleb again. What has happened in the meantime is Joshua brought the people of Israel over the Jordan. They fought the battle of Jericho. They wiped out Ai, the five kings. They came in and did all this. Then, lo and behold, in Joshua chapter 14, here is our guy showing back up.

Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenazite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea.

Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart.

Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God.

And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.

And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old.

As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.

Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.

Caleb was prepared. Caleb was prepared when his time came. When his time came, he stood up and said, "Joshua, I am calling in a favor. I want that mountain." "Which mountain, Joshua?" "You remember when we came here to visit and spy out that land forty years ago? I walked up that mountain, and you were with me, and we got those grapes, and we came down. I thought to myself, 'About three weeks from now, I am going to be coming up here, and I am going to start building the house because we are going to go through these people like a hot knife through butter.'" "Joshua, I have been waiting forty years, forty-five years, to come up here, and I want that mountain because I wholly followed the Lord. I stood up first. You remember that, Joshua?" "Yes, I appreciate it because I do not know if I would have had the guts to stand up without you, Caleb. I am glad you stood up first. You gave me the strength. You gave me the courage to stand

up." I am taking a little liberties with the text here, if you do not know. But when he was ready, his time came. He was ready.

And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak.

You know what would have happened when Caleb walked down that hill forty-five years ago if they were known? Apparently, the people that were there saw him because it said, "We were in their sight, and they were in ours." I bet those people laughed at him walking down the hill. "Yes, you people out there in the wilderness coming to check things out, huh? It is nice, is it not? I have a nice big house up here. Go ahead and run, guys. Why do you not bring the rest of your little grasshoppers up here? We will just squish you like bugs." Caleb walked down that hill going, "You just wait, sucker. I am coming back for you." He looked up there and saw that giant pointing down, saying, "Hahaha." For forty-five years, Caleb just, "Lord, I want to go up to that mountain. I want to go up to that mountain." I just picture this in my mind: when he asked Joshua, "Joshua, let me be the one to take the mountain," that he walked into that city, and there was another eighty-year-old guy there, an eighty-year-old giant. Caleb said, "I am looking for you, big boy. I have been waiting for a piece of you for forty-five years. Come on!" And Caleb tore him limb from limb. He had been waiting to fight for forty-five years. I would have loved to have seen that eighty-year-old man up there. I bet he looked like the Tasmanian devil. I bet, man, he left a trail of destruction behind him. But he was waiting for what God wanted him to do. For forty-five years, he knew God told him, "Caleb, go up. Take the mountain. It is yours. I have given you the victory." And he had to wait. He had to be patient. And he had to be prepared for when that time came.

You notice it did not say he was eighty-five years old and fat and had diabetes and could not even walk anymore, and he was on a motorized Walmart cart. Caleb stayed in shape for eighty-five years. Why? Because he knew his time was coming, and he wanted to be prepared so that he could still fight.

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

Be prepared when it comes time to step up for God. Most martial artists train countless hours, and they are never going to be jumped on the street like they imagine in their head. Everybody likes thinking of that. They are going to come out, and they are going to get jumped, and "Ha!" breaking limbs, all that stuff. Well, that is cool in the movies, but it is not reality. Most people are not jumped. You hear of a few people, but maybe here, maybe three or four people have been jumped, not everybody. But I will tell you, I pity the fool that messes with them. Why? Because they are prepared. Very seldom are you going to be asked to preach in a split second or to preach while the plane is going down and you are leading countless people to Christ like our guy on the Titanic, John Harper. Very few people are going to be called to do that. But be prepared in case you are.

It is interesting about John Harper. We were looking up some more stuff, and I do not remember whose book or what book I was looking at, but he drowned, almost drowned, three other times in

his life. Once he fell down a well, and his mother got him out and practically saved his life. Two other times, once he got washed out to sea and came back almost dead. It was like he almost drowned three other times, came very close within an inch of his life. It was like God was preparing him for the day that he would drown. Why? So he could preach and be calm about it. I was just reading the story about him, about coming up, and they said the last word out of his mouth was something like, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." It is just remarkable. Where was I reading this? I think I maybe looked it up online, and we got back, and here he was. He was trying to lead a guy to Christ who was floating on a piece of driftwood, and the guy rejected it, and he gave him his life preserver and said, "You need this more than I do." Then he went and dealt with some other people and came back, and he succeeded in leading that guy to Christ, and that guy was actually saved from it because of him. He never thought that would happen to him, but he was prepared in case it would. That is never going to happen to any of you, if so, one or two, but be prepared for the day it is.

Are you prepared to lead somebody to Christ? Do you know the scripture verses to go to? One, two, three, I hope you do. I saw a little booklet back there that said, I think it was, "How to Lead Somebody to Christ." You should get that, and you should know that. You should have that in your brain. If you cannot have it in your brain, put it on a piece of paper, reference the notes through your Bible. Be prepared because somebody's eternity, somebody's soul, might depend on your preparation. On you, your preparation, not mine. Somebody might be in hell because you were not ready. I know it has happened to me in the past where I knew I had the opportunity to witness, and I blew it. I knew I blew it, and I said, "Lord, please do not let their eternal destiny depend on me not being faithful." At the judgment seat of Christ, that stuff is going to come up. "I had a person in place for you, and you were not ready." That is why there is going to be weeping there. We want to be prepared. We want to be like Caleb.

V. Caleb's Influence and Legacy

The thing about Caleb is he took on the biggest and baddest enemies in the land. He never commanded the multitudes that Joshua did. He never conquered the kings and the cities that Joshua did, but he conquered one mountain that God gave him, just one. Chances are nobody here is going to be a big shot. If you have, you have delusions of grandeur. You are not going to be a big shot, and you should not try to be a big shot. Because all that big shot thinking in your head, it is just pride anyway. So you have to put that down and realize that to be a servant of Jesus Christ, you do not need to get high; you need to get low. You do not want to be exalted high; you want to be low. You want to come in on your hands and on your knees. You want to do what God wants, even if it is small.

"Lord, I cannot speak." Well, Moses could not speak. "Lord, I am handicapped. I cannot even walk." Okay, pray. You can pray for somebody who can. Maybe the Lord did not call me to the mission field. Maybe I am not equipped to go. Maybe I could not handle life on the mission field, being alone, separated from all this stuff. I can pray for them, right? Well, maybe God has not called you to do what some of these other people are doing, but without your prayers lifting up and coming up to the throne of God, they are going at it alone. So you need to be faithful in

praying for these people who are out here on the front lines in this building, missionaries you support, people you know. Pray for them.

For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

It is the small things. It is not the big things. We have a tendency to think in such huge terms when it is about being faithful in the small things: reading your Bible, praying, opening your mouth a little bit, not standing on top of this place where we were standing up at the Union Station where you could have just yelled to the whole world. It is not about being faithful and yelling to the whole world; it is about talking to the one. It is the small things. Do not despise the day of small things. Do not despise the small things that you have to nickel and dime and do day after day to stay faithful to God. That is the stuff. It is not about big shots. God sees what you are doing, and more importantly, God sees why you are doing what you are doing. That is the heart. It comes down to the heart.

You may have some delays before you get to where you are going. It might appear you are getting a runaround, but God knows what He is doing. He is getting you prepared for what He has for you. Just be in the right place when God calls you to do something.

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Paul said that, and he ended up in Rome eventually, but not the way he thought. He thought he was going to ride into Rome and preach to all the churches. When he came to Rome, he came in handcuffs. Either way, he made it to Rome, right? But it was not the way. Maybe you think, "Well, I am called to do this. I am going to be doing this." Well, maybe you are, and maybe God put that desire in your heart to do that, but do not start making your plans. Do not let your plans get in front of God's plans.

Most boxers will train eight to ten weeks for a fight that might last forty-five minutes. I am a big boxing fan. I remember when I was in junior high, Mike Tyson fought Michael Spinks in Atlantic City, June 27, 1988. I was so excited for that. You had two undefeated fighters, both with a legitimate claim to be the true heavyweight champion. Spinks had beat the man who beat the man who beat the man. Tyson had all the belts. It was called "once and for all." That thing went ninety-one seconds. Spinks just got flattened. He was scared; he just got flattened. I remember in that post-fight press conference, Tyson was standing there, and one of the reporters said, "You make it look easy." He was kind of like, "Come on, man. It is ridiculous. We are here ninety-one seconds." This was the most expensive tickets of all time up to that point. And he says, "Make it look easy?" "It is never easy. I put in eight to ten weeks to make it that easy. It is not like I just came out here and did this. I worked for that." That is how it is going to be. It may have looked easy when I just walked over to talk to this guy in a prison cell. "Yes, just believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." "Oh, he got saved." And that is all that. No, a lot went into that. The opportunity you get to lead somebody to Christ, a lot goes into that. Study goes into that. Prayer goes into that. But yet the event itself that happens, well, that might just be a very short time, but be prepared, be faithful.

Go to Judges chapter 1, and we will conclude this thing. We are going to look at Caleb again, on his way out.

And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjathsepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.

And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

Caleb laid down something and said, "Hey, you want to marry my daughter? You take that land." A man stood up named Othniel. Who is Othniel? We will find out here in Judges chapter 3.

And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.

You have Joshua and you have Othniel. Who is the strong man behind each of them? Caleb. He was never the big shot. He did not get a book named after him. He was not even called a judge, but he influenced two of the greatest men of that time. Would that you could do that. You might never be the big man, but maybe you can influence a kid that could be.

In church history, many of you have heard of a guy named David Brainerd, right? Some of you. He died at twenty-nine years old. He had a soul and a heart to reach the American Indian. He did not have a lot of success. He was sickly his whole life. He died at twenty-nine years old. What a wasted life in the world's eyes. But while he was doing that, he was writing a diary. Very few of us here would have been content to live that life, dying at twenty-nine, not having success in the ministry. God did not really use his life, but God used his burden. God took that diary, and let me give you a few of the names here: Henry Martyn, William Carey, Jim Elliot, Adoniram Judson. Just some of the missionaries who went to the ends of the earth with the gospel that were influenced by a man's heart. David Brainerd did not reach them, but his heart reached them all. God said, "I am not going to use you to do that. I am going to use you to put the burden in other men's hearts." Sometimes God will do that with you.

You pray for these people, these kids, you know, the children's ministry. Everybody wants to do the children's ministry. Everybody wants to stay in where all the people are, the grownups, and have fun. But you might have Othniel in there. Without you taking the time to spend with him and to invest in him, Othniel is going to end up out in the world. Somebody needs to be there for Othniel. Serve the Lord. Take the opportunities God gives you. Do something for Him. Be faithful with the lot you have been given when you have been given it.

VI. Conclusion and Call to Action

I do not know who is here and who is not. I know a lot of the faces here. But you might be a Christian here, you might not. If you are not, let me tell you something: Jesus Christ cares for sinful men. Jesus Christ cares for sinful women. Jesus Christ said, "I came not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If that is you and you need Jesus Christ, come talk to the preacher here. Come talk to one of these guys here. They could take a Bible in ten minutes, five minutes,

depending on where you are, and show you how you can know. The Bible says, "These things have I written unto you that you can know that you have eternal life." You can know. Would it not be good to lay your head down on a pillow and know that you have eternal life tonight instead of just wondering the great "if"? "But what if? I hope I am saved." You can know. And you can know you can have a home in heaven.

Now, you Christians, is it time to be faithful? Is it time to step up? Maybe it is. I hope it is. Do not be content with lackadaisicalness. Do not be content with laziness. Do not be content with just staying behind the scenes. Hey, you might be behind the scenes. That might be where God has you. So do not think, "Well, just because I am not out in the open doing it..." No, God might have you there, but be faithful there. Be praying for the people there. How many of you pray for the guys who go down there with the grills? They could get mugged. They could get jumped. All kinds of stuff could happen to them. Are your prayers behind them, protecting them? If not, make sure they are. Are you praying for your pastor? He has to preach every week. You pray, and then he can actually give you something. Lord, protect him, keep him safe. Look after him. Give him wisdom in dealing with you people. He needs it because in and of himself, he is not capable of being a pastor. He is not capable of dealing with you. You have to have God's help to do that. So be there. Step up. Be a Caleb.

Let us pray. Lord, thank You for everybody here. I pray You would put something in each and every person here to be like Caleb. Put something in each and every one of us, Lord, to be able to take that extra step and to do something for Your sake and for Your sake alone. Lord, we just love You for being so good to us, and just thank You and pray it all in Jesus' name. Amen.