

# Joshua 14

Sunday 11/3/2013

If you have your Bibles with you this morning, go ahead and turn to the book of Joshua chapter 14. Before I get started, if I get asked for a show of hands, is there anybody in the room today that got an email from me this week when I was in the Philippines? If you didn't, it just means that you weren't in my contact list on my email. If you did, then let me just say, it's terribly disappointing that Pambu Sket is the only person that texted me to check and see if we really were mugged in the Philippines and if we really needed money. Bob apparently replied to the email. I hope you didn't send very much money. So thanks for praying for us while we were gone. We made it back safely. We got back in time for trick-or-treating on Thursday, and I praise the Lord, and we were really glad about that.

The funniest part about the whole story, well, I can't tell you the funniest part because the guy I used to work with, he texted me something that was inappropriate, so I can't tell you what he texted. But all of the girls' school teachers and the staff up at the elementary school, we all have all their email addresses, and they all got it. So they're running into the girls' classrooms the day that it went out, asking them what was wrong. They're like, "Yeah, no, everybody's at home. We're all fine and good." So anyway, that was interesting this week. So I'm sorry for that. I hope your email doesn't get hacked because mine did.

Hopefully, you're in Joshua chapter 14. We'll go ahead and get started this morning. Most of you know, as you study the Bible, and you understand what's going on here in the book of Joshua as we come to this point. But for those of you that don't, let me just give you a little bit of background so you know historically kind of where we're at and what's going on.

Now, the most important thing you need to understand is the theme of your Bible. Most people will say the theme of the Bible is Jesus, the theme of the Bible is salvation, the theme of the Bible is the church, and a lot of different things. All those things are well and good, and as far as I'm concerned, certainly the most important aspect of the Bible is the crucifixion of Christ and the blood atonement that He offered to save me from my sins. But the theme of the Bible overall, as far as what's most important to God Himself, is a kingdom. God's trying to establish a kingdom on this earth with mankind, and that's basically what the whole history of this Bible is. You can trace the history of that kingdom through the nation of Israel in four distinct stages, and you've been taught this before.

We know that starting back in the book of Genesis as we head up with Abraham and moving forward, we have the first stage, which we call the formulation of the nation of Israel, where God starts with a man in Abraham and then eventually turns him into a great nation and begins to formulate this nation that He wants to establish His kingdom with. Then, as we move into the book of Exodus with Moses, this is stage two, and this is the calling out of the nation of Israel. Then here in Joshua, what we have going on is from Joshua through the books of the Kings and the Chronicles, you have stage three, which is the establishment of the nation of Israel, and God's beginning to do some things now. He's called them out of Egypt, and He's got an inheritance for them as they cross over into the Promised Land, cross over Jordan here in the book of Joshua.

What I want to look at today, what we're going to talk about, is a great man in your Bible that I think a lot of times is overlooked. You don't hear a lot of messages preached about him. You don't hear a lot of things said about him. That man is Caleb, and he's a great study. He's a great study of what you and I should be as Christians in our service for the Lord. We hear great messages preached about Abraham and about Moses, the friends of God, and about Noah and the great things that God did with him and how he was basically the only faithful person out of five billion that got on the ark with seven of his family members. The Bible says he preached righteousness for a hundred years to no avail, but he was faithful in service to the Lord, and he got on that ark, and God saved him and started anew with him.

Then you have David, the greatest king in the history of all mankind and certainly Israel's greatest king. Then you hear messages about how we should dare to be a Daniel and about Paul, who's the greatest Christian to ever live, and Philip the evangelist and the things that he accomplished and what God did with him over there and with the Ethiopian eunuch, and on and on and on about all the great men in the Bible that we hear messages about. Here's Caleb sitting over here, and you just don't ever hear very much about him. You know what Caleb is? Caleb's just a regular old foot soldier for God. Caleb's just a guy over here in the trenches, just serving the Lord, doing what he knows that he's supposed to be doing. He didn't even make it into God's Hall of Fame over there in Hebrews chapter 11. I certainly wouldn't claim that there's any errors in this Bible, but when you study Caleb's life, if I could be so bold as to say that God made one mistake, it might be that He left him out of Hebrews chapter 11 because I think Caleb certainly belongs to be talked about with some of those other great men that were in there.

Now here in Joshua chapter 14, let's start reading here in verse 6.

*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 swore 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.*

*And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.*

*Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.*

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, we love You and we thank You for the Lord Jesus. I thank You so much for the opportunity to stand in front of this church, Lord, and preach out of Your Bible. I pray that You'll give me the right words to say, Lord. Please just remove my flesh from this process and let Your Holy Spirit empower me and speak through me. Allow me to say the things that You laid on my heart to say and just allow it to be a blessing to each and every one of us today as we take these things and learn about Caleb's life and see some of the different things that he stood for and the things that impacted him and as they apply to us in our daily lives as Christians. We love You and we give You all the honor and glory for all that's said and done, and we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

## I. Caleb: A Picture of a Faithful Christian

Alright, now as I said, what I love about Caleb is Caleb's just a tremendous picture of you and of me and what we should be every day as soldiers for the Lord Jesus Christ. The way that we should be living our lives, the things that we should be doing, the attitudes that we should be having. We're going to look at four aspects of Caleb's life today, and I want to just see if we can learn some things about how we need to be.

## II. Caleb in Bondage

The first thing that I want to look at is Caleb in bondage. Look at Joshua chapter 14 and verse 7.

*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.*

He says he was 40 years old at Kadeshbarnea. So God calls Israel out of the land of Egypt, delivers them from the hand of Pharaoh and out of the bondage that they were in, and they travel for about a year or two, and they get to Kadeshbarnea, and they're basically ready to cross over Jordan into the Promised Land that God had given to them. Caleb says here that he was 40 years old when that happened. What that means is that Caleb was born while Israel was in bondage in Egypt, in the land of Egypt. He was born into that same bondage that Israel had been in for those 400 years. It means he was born as a slave and suffered with all of the other children of Israel through all of the things that they went through.

Turn over to the book of Exodus chapter 1, and let's look at how God described what Israel was going through back in this time.

*And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.*

*Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.*

*And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:*

*Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.*

*Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.*

*But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.*

*And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:*

*And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.*

I love that word "rigor." We had meet the teacher a few months ago, right before the school year started, and Maddie's going into sixth grade, well, she's in sixth grade this year. So the teachers are talking about all their curriculum, and the science teacher got up and said that the science curriculum that they were going to be studying this year was very rigorous. Maddie kind of looked at me, and she's like, "What does that mean?" I said, "It's going to be tough." I said, "Rigor means not very much fun, not very easy." He says twice in here, he says that the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor.

This time period when Israel was in Egypt, and they were under bondage, and they were in slavery, is a picture of you and I before we got saved, and the bondage that we were under and how we were enslaved in our sins. The Bible says we were dead in our trespasses and sins.

*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

*Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

*Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

It says we had our conversation in times past. You know that word "conversation" in the Bible, in your King James Bible, is not just talking about the things that we say, but the things that we do, the way that we live our lives. Every single thing that we are that makes us up, who we are, what we do, where we go, what we see, that's our conversation. It says our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh.

*And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.*

*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

So you and I, before we got saved, the Bible says we were in bondage, terrible bondage, just like the nation of Israel was back here in Egypt. They had a taskmaster that made sure that every single aspect of their life was absolute misery. They had no control over any choices they made. They couldn't do the things that they wanted to. They couldn't go where they wanted to go. They had to do what they were told to do. The Bible describes our lives under the bondage of sin as being just the same. It says we were slaves, basically, to that sinful life.

*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,*

*Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,*

*Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

It's these works of the flesh that we were bound to. That sin was our taskmaster. Every single day that sin told us what we were going to do, told us where we were going to go. Some of us today still bear the scars from that time that we spent in bondage. We have in our history and our past maybe destroyed marriages, destroyed families because of gambling or because of drugs. We have failing health today because of alcohol problems or because of smoking, or go on down the list, all of the different things that we might have had in our lives that we may still bear the scars today. Just like Israel, as they were finally freed from that bondage, many of them probably still bore scars the rest of their lives from the whips that they had from that taskmaster. That's the background that Caleb came from. That's the history that he had, just like us.

You see, Israel in that time had no power to deliver themselves from the slavery that they were in, just as you and I had no power to deliver ourselves from the death and the sin that we were bound under. But God back then stepped in, performed a whole slew of miracles to be able to get Israel out of that mess, and He eventually saved Caleb and all of Israel through the blood of the Passover lamb, just as He came down and delivered us from our bondage through the blood of the Lamb, the Lamb of God, God's Passover Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ. He died for our sins on Calvary's cross and offered up His blood as free atonement for anybody that would accept it to be able to save us and deliver us from the bondage of sin that we were under.

You see, Caleb's character was forged as a result of that time that he spent in Egypt. Those 40 years that he spent in Egypt where he was whipped and he was beat continually and he was told to go here, do this, do that, that forged his character, that helped make him who he was, not just because of what he went through, but because of the fact that once God delivered him from it, he now has this history and this ability to appreciate what God had done for him by always being

able to look back and remember where he had been, remember what he had been delivered from, remember what God did for him and had a tremendous influence over him for the rest of his life and his service to the Lord. Caleb never forgot what God did for him and what God saved him from.

So I ask you this, I ask myself this, what about us? Do we think daily about what God saved us from? Do we think daily about what He did when He hung on that cross and He bled and He died and He suffered so we could have forgiveness of our sins, so we could have eternal life, we could have a relationship with all-powerful and almighty God that we don't deserve to have because of the sins we committed? Do we think about that every day and do we think about what God delivered us from and do we use that as our motivation and as our drive to serve Him on a daily basis and to keep ourselves faithful and to keep ourselves on the straight and narrow where we need to be? I promise you, Caleb did.

Israel's problem as they got into the wilderness and really throughout their whole history was they always forgot what God had done for them, and we need to learn the same lesson. I guarantee you and I promise you if that was Israel's struggle then that's your struggle and that's my struggle because I'm no better than they are. We can look at the Bible and we can talk about it and we can say how terrible that must be, we can say look at them, I mean my goodness God did this miracle, He did that miracle, He did the other miracle, He turned the blood to water, He brought the hail and the frogs and all these different things, and He brought the Passover lamb, He came and He killed the firstborn, and look at all the things that He did, He parted the Red Sea and then He drowned Pharaoh and all of his armies as He let them escape. Look at the things that He did, how in the world could Israel ever forget what God did and start falling away and start worshipping other gods?

We know that as a result of our sin, we deserve to spend all of eternity in hell burning in the lake of fire forever and ever, right? We know that there's not a single thing that the Bible says, there's not a single thing that we can do in our lives to ever get free from that. There's not enough good works that can be done, there's not enough things that we can do to free ourselves from that, yet Christ came down, He died on the cross willingly, shed His blood for you and for me, and then offered it to us freely with no strings attached and said, "All you have to do is believe on Me, and you can have this, and you can have forgiveness for your sins." He did that for us, yet how is it that we can forget? How is it that we can go through our lives and we can get caught up in our jobs and our careers, we can get caught up in our sin, the things that supposedly God delivered us from, and we fall right back into it, and we forget what He did for us? We forget the sacrifice that He made and the miracle that He did when He came down and died for us and died for all mankind and then offered it to us and offered us free forgiveness for our sins.

You know, our problem today is that some of us are still working for our old slave master. Some of us are still working for that old taskmaster, that old sin nature, instead of serving our risen Savior that we're supposed to be serving today. Some of us are still caught up in all the same sins that God had delivered us from instead of serving the risen Savior that saved us from Him in the first place. No, Caleb never forgot. Caleb never forgot that he was born into bondage, that he was born into slavery, and it forged his character. It forged who he was moving forward.

### III. Caleb in His Faith

Now let's look at the next aspect, and after we see Caleb in bondage, now we're going to look at Caleb in his faith. If we go back to Numbers chapter 13, if you want to turn there, back in Numbers chapter 13, this is the time where they're getting ready to get sent out to spy out the land, and I think most of you know the story. They had come to Kadeshbarnea as I mentioned earlier, and Moses chooses 12 men to go out and spy the land. They're ready to cross over Jordan into the Promised Land that God told them that He wanted them to have, and Caleb was of course one of those 12 men, and Joshua also.

*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,*

*Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.*

Alright, so what's the problem here? There's a problem right off the bat that we need to look at and that we need to notice, and it doesn't look like it's a problem unless you compare scripture with scripture. When you first look at this in verse 1, it says, "And the LORD spake unto Moses and said, Send thou men." It looks like this came from God. God told him, He said, "Look, I want you to send men over into the land. I want you to spy out the land and see what it looks like and come back and bring a report to the people." But if we go over to Deuteronomy chapter 1, what we actually find out is it didn't quite go down like that.

The first problem that Israel made here, the first mistake that they made, is that they never should have sent 12 men over to spy the land. What they should have done is believed what God told them about it in the first place and the fact that God had promised it to them and He told them what it was like and He said, "It's yours. I'm going to give it to you," and that should have been enough for them. That should have been enough when they were ready to go that they say, "Let's go, point the direction in the right way, and we're on our way." But instead, they sent these men.

Let's see what happened in Deuteronomy chapter 1. Here's Moses talking.

*And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the LORD our God commanded us; and we came to Kadeshbarnea.*

*And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the LORD our God doth give unto us.*

*Behold, the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.*

*And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.*

So he tells them right there, "Behold, here's the land God told you about. God says go up and possess it." So it's time to go. Then what happens in verse 22? "And ye came near unto me every

one of you, and said, We will send men before us and they shall search us out the land and bring us word again by what way we must go up and into what cities we shall come." So it was the people that circumvented God's plan. God told him, "Go." He said, "Here's the land. I told you how great it is. I told you that I have it for you. I've been holding it for you. It belongs to you. You go up and possess it. I'm going to give it to you." They should have had faith. I mean, it hadn't even been two years since He did everything that He did in Egypt to get them out of the hands of Pharaoh. Now all of a sudden, they're nervous about going over into the land because they don't know what's out there. So they want to send these men.

We see what actually happened here, even though back in Numbers 13 it says the Lord spake unto Moses. What you see here is actually kind of a frightening principle, and we see it a couple other places, especially with Israel. They're always getting themselves into trouble like this. Israel is always getting themselves into trouble when they start telling God what they need instead of just accepting what God tells them that they need. Remember over there when God never wanted them to have a king, right? But what does Israel do? Israel says, "We want to be like the other nations, God. So You give us a king. You make us a king like the other nations." What does God do? That's what He knows is best for them. He goes ahead and gives them what they want. We should always be careful when we ask for things from God because sometimes, even if it's not the right thing for us, He'll go ahead and give us what we ask for.

You know, this is a great picture of the dysfunction that's in our prayer lives a lot of times. We're taught in discipleship, basic discipleship, that the purpose for prayer is not for us to go to the Lord and give Him some sort of shopping list of the things that we want. We go to God and we say, "God, do this for me. God, do that for me. God, give me this. If You have a little bit of time, I'll take a side of that. I don't know why You haven't fixed this yet, Lord, but I told You a couple months ago that that's going on. I got this happening at my job, and this person's being mean to me, and I don't like that person at church anymore. So if You could get rid of them, and then we'll be fine. I'll let You know next week what else is on the list." That's how we pray to God. That's how we come to Him. But we're taught in discipleship that the purpose of prayer is not so we can go to God and tell Him what it is that we want. The purpose of prayer is for God to be able to change our heart attitude to line up with what He already knows that we need.

This is the problem that Israel had. This is the problem that we have in our own prayer life. We will get ourselves into trouble over and over again when we go to God and we think we know better what we need than what He knows that we need. When we go to Him and say, "God, this is what I need. This is what I want You to give me." You know, like I said earlier, the scary thing about this story here is sometimes God goes ahead and gives it to us, even if it's not what's best for us. We end up running into some problems as a result. Israel has to pay a stiff price, and they have to learn a harsh lesson as a result of their unbelief in God that started right here when they didn't take His word for it and didn't just go into the land and possess it. But they decide they want to send these men over to spy out the land. So God allowed them to do it because they asked for it.

Then let's see what happens. Turn back to Numbers chapter 13, and let's read the story here starting in verse 17.

*And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain;*

*And see the land, what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many;*

*And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds;*

*And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.*

*So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath.*

*And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)*

*And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.*

*The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.*

*And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.*

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

Now, if you don't know the children of Anak, that's the giants. We think that the giants were gone and were destroyed in the flood, but there's obviously more around even here after the flood, and we of course know of the story of David and Goliath. So there's giants in this land. It says, "And they came unto the brook of Eshcol and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they buried between two upon a staff, and they brought of the pomegranates and of the figs." Now, this must be quite a cluster of grapes if they had to cut the thing down and put it on a staff and carry it between two people. Last time I went to the grocery store, I picked up a cluster of grapes, and it weighs like, you know, like five ounces. You could put it in your back pocket if you wanted to. These were some serious grapes. These are like grapes on steroids, okay? This was a fruitful land. This was a land that was better than anything they could have ever dreamed of, and they grabbed a cluster to bring back to show everybody.

In verse 24, it says, "The place was called the brook of Eshcol because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence, and they returned from searching of the land after 40 days, and they went and came to Moses and to Aaron and to all the congregation of the children of Israel under the wilderness of Paran to Kadesh and brought back word unto them and unto all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land." So now they've come back, they've gone out, they've spied out the land, they spent 40 days, they've brought back some samples of the grapes, and they're going to come back, and they're going to give a report of what they saw, and we can't miss this. We've got to see what happens here and what transpires.

Verse 27, it says, "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 here we've got Caleb and Joshua, and they're excited about it. They're saying, "Hey, boys, this is everything that God said it was going to be. Wait till you see it. You know, just wait till you get over here and see this thing. This land flows with milk and honey. Look at the grapes that we brought back. This place is something else. We got to get over there right away."

Look at verse 28, though. Now we get a little bit of a negative report. It says, "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." So now they're starting to hear, "Okay, but we got a few enemies in place here. There's a few nations that you all may have heard of before, the Amalekites and the Jebusites, and they don't exactly like us. And then there's giants in the land." So the people clearly are starting to get a little bit nervous because look what happens in verse 30. It says, "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."

So here's Caleb, who before Moses, gets up in front of the whole congregation and calming the people down and saying, "Listen, listen, we can do this." He says, "We're well able to overcome it. Let's go up at once and possess it." Caleb's not interested in holding committee meetings about things. Caleb's not interested in putting things up for a vote and seeing what the majority rule is. Caleb says, "Let's go at once and let's go possess it."

In verse 31, it says, "But," you always got to pay attention to those "buts" in the Bible. "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."

So we've got 12 men here that go up, 12 men that all see the same land, 12 men that see the same giants and see the same nations. They spend 40 days looking at the same things. They taste the same fruit. They see everything that God wants them to see, and yet we have two different reports that come back. We have two different views of the world, two different views of what God wanted them to see. In verse 27, we see that it says, "The land floweth with milk and honey." Yet in verse 28 and 29, we've got the doubters and the naysayers starting to worry about all the nations that were there, all the great nations that were their enemies that were standing there. Yet in verse 30, as I mentioned earlier, Caleb says he stilled the people as he says, "We are well able to overcome it."

Why did Caleb say that? How in the world does he know? I mean, who's going to go up against a bunch of giants, right? I mean, the giants, these guys are, they're like 12 feet tall. I don't think anybody in this room could handle one of those giants, 12 feet tall. I mean, it's absolutely insane. Yet Caleb here says, "Let's go." Why does Caleb say, "Let's go?" Because Caleb remembered that the same God that delivered them out of the hand of Pharaoh and destroyed the armies that were trying to track them down and that did all of the miracles that got them out of Egypt, the same God that died on the cross and paid an eternal sin for you and for me and delivered me from that sin had the ability to deliver them from whatever nations were in their way, especially considering they were in the land that God had promised Israel in the first place. Caleb knew there was absolutely nothing that he had to fear. There was nothing that he had to worry about as long as they were in God's will, as long as they were doing what God wanted them to do, and as long as they were taking the land that God had already promised them. Caleb simply believed what God told them and then thought in his mind, "What in the world do we have to fear? I mean, we saw what God did. We saw what He's capable of doing, and if He's given it to us already, let's just go. Let's go."

I mean, it's amazing what people will do when they just don't want to believe what God said. It's amazing the defeat that Christians are willing to live in because we just won't believe the principles of the Word of God. We believe in Him enough to save us, to save us from our sins, yet when it comes down to it, we don't believe that He's God enough to help us with our problems today, to get us through our struggles, and to help us accomplish what He has for us to

accomplish. It's like we think that God saved us. He gives us something that He wants us to do. He gives us a Bible that He wants us to learn, yet He's not going to give us the ability to learn it. He's not going to give us the Holy Spirit to teach it to us. He's not going to give us a church that we can get involved in so we can fulfill God's plan in our lives, so God can bring people into our lives that we can be a testimony to, that we can witness to. He's not going to do any of those things. It makes no sense whatsoever, yet that's how most of us live our lives. Most of us live our lives thinking that God's just not going to be able to do it. He's just not going to be able to help us, and we've got to just figure things out for ourselves. We've got to do things on our own, and we can't go do that. We can't go do this restart thing. Go out on the streets and talk to homeless people. What in the world? All kinds of terrible things could happen. We could get mugged, or we could get... What happened to me in Manila last week? Bad things happen sometimes. Yet there's no faith and trust that God's going to take care of us and that He's going to do what He says He's going to do.

In Numbers 13:31-33, what do we see? We see the evil report from the majority. There were 12 spies that went in, and there were only two that came back with a good report: Joshua and Caleb. Ten of them came back with a bad report. I'm going to tell you something, and you see it all the way through the Bible, and you need to remember this: the majority, generally speaking, when it comes to God, the majority is not the right place to be. You find very few... In fact, you probably don't find any places in the Bible where the majority is on God's side or where God is on the majority's side. If you find yourself in the majority in anything that has to do with God or the Bible, you better take a look around and reevaluate your stance because you're probably in the wrong place, especially in today's day and age where we live.

Now let's read on, go into Numbers 14. Let's see what happens as the story moves on.

*And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.*

*And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!*

*And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?*

*And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.*

*Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.*

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

*And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land.*

*If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.*

*Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.*

*But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.*

So the entire nation of Israel, they're boo-hooing now. They're saying, "Oh, oh, what are we going to do now? God brought us out here." Look what they say. Look at verse 2, it says, "And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would God we had died in this wilderness? And wherefore had the Lord brought us into this land to fall by the sword that our wives and our children should be a prey, were it not better for us to return into Egypt?"

I mean, what in the world? These bunch of babies are now sitting here, they're standing in front of the land that God has promised them with the redemption that He gave them from Egypt just right in the rearview mirror. They're not even very far away from it right now. It was within the last two years that all of that had happened, and now they're crying and they're boo-hooing because they're saying it would have been better if we had just stayed back in Egypt and died there than for God to bring us all the way here. I mean, why would He bring us right up here and tease us with this land just so we can go and die by the sword of all of these giants and all of these enemies that we've got here? I mean, what tremendous lack of faith that these people had. It's absolutely amazing how they could do what they did, how God could do what He did and deliver them how He delivered them, and now they stand here and they actually have the gall to accuse God of bringing them up to the point that they're just going to get slaughtered by these nations. Absolutely amazing.

Yet, isn't that the exact same thing that we do? I mean, we have the miracle that God did in our lives when He saved us. You guys know what you were like before you got saved. I know what I was like before I got saved. If I was God, I wouldn't have touched me with a 10-foot pole. I wouldn't have touched some of you with a 20-foot pole. Yet He did, and He came down and He touched my heart and He saved me from my sin, and He loved me when I shouldn't have been loved, and He died for me when I shouldn't have been died for, and He forgave me when I didn't deserve forgiveness. Why would He do that and then just abandon me when He's got something that He wants me to do? The answer is that He wouldn't. The answer is that He wouldn't.

Let's read on verse 4. It says, "And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt." So they've got their captain, they've got Moses, they've got Joshua, and now here they are, they're ready to elect a new leader. Like, "We've got a new idea. We're not so thrilled about this plan, about going into the land. We know You said that it's God's land that He gave to us, and You know these things are going to give it to us, but we just don't really believe that. So here's a new idea. Let's elect somebody new to lead us, and let's go back to Egypt where it was so wonderful, and they whipped us and they beat us and they made us build buildings and build cities for them, and then our wives and our children can die as slaves instead of dying by the sword of these giants."

It says then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. In verse 6, "And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes, and they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land which we pass through to search it is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it us, a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land, for they are bread for us, their defenses departed from them, and the Lord is with us, fear them not. But the congregation bade stone them with stones, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel."

So here we go one last time. It says Caleb and Joshua went to the whole people and are begging and are pleading with them and are telling them, "Guys, listen, it is a good land." It says it is an exceeding good land, and he says that if the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it us, a land which floweth with milk and honey. Notice something important here in verse 9. It says, "Only rebel not ye against the Lord." You know, when we think of rebellion, we think of just absolutely turning around and running away from God as fast as we can. We think of rebellion, we think about, you know, all the really horrible, terrible things and, you know, leaving church and drinking and smoking and doing drugs and all these different things, and all those things certainly are rebellion against the Lord. But Caleb and Joshua here are equating a simple lack of faith, which is the basic problem that Israel has, and failure to believe what God had told them as rebelling against God.

You know, we think that, you know, we just misdefine so many things in our lives today, and we think that we are fine, and we justify things that we do or things that we don't do as really not being all that bad. But I love how God just puts it right, you know, He just puts it right there, and He says, "You don't believe Me. You have a lack of faith. You think that I can't be there for you and do what I told you I'll do. That's the same as rebellion." He says, "Rebel not against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land." If we put more fear in the enemies of God, if we have more fear for them than we do for God Himself, that's rebellion in God's eyes.

So what we have here basically is we have two reports from two different kinds of people, and that's how it's like every day in our lives. That's how it's like for people in this church. You're going to have two different kinds of people that when you talk about ministry and you talk about the things that are going on, you're going to get two different attitudes, and you're going to get two different reports.

- In Numbers 14:7, Caleb and Joshua say, "It's an exceeding good land."
- Yet the other 10, the majority opinion over in Numbers 13:32, say, "It's the land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof."
- In Numbers 14:9, Joshua and Caleb say, "They are bread for us."
- Yet the majority opinion over in Numbers 13:33 says, "We're grasshoppers in their sight."

You've got one group on one side that's living by faith, and you've got another group that's living by sight. The Bible says over in Corinthians that we're to live by faith and not by sight. When you live by sight, you see the world the way the majority does here. You see that there are giants,

that they're 12 feet tall, and that I am a grasshopper in their sight, and they could come step on me if they wanted to. But when you live by faith and you remember that, "Oh yeah, you know what, that giant over there is standing on a piece of land that God promised to me, so I'm pretty sure that God will take care of him as long as I go in and claim it the way that God told me to." That's the difference between the minority opinion here and the majority opinion.

Well, what's the result? The result is that the unbelieving generation, because of their doubt, because of their fears, and because of their lack of faith, and those 10 spies, they all die in the wilderness. God basically says, "You know what?" He was ready to just come down and wipe everybody out. What He decided to do was He said, "You know what, because of your unbelief, because of your lack of faith, because of your lack of vision, I'm sending you all out in the wilderness for 40 years, and I'm going to let you wander until everybody that's over, I think over the age of 20, dies in the wilderness. Everybody that's over the age of 20, I'm not going to let you go into that land and possess it and see what I had for you because today you failed to believe what I told you.

Remember, it goes all the way back to what? It goes all the way back to the beginning when they decided to tell God what they needed, and they decided to send those spies into the land. They decided that that's what they needed to do, and what did that stem from? It stemmed from a simple lack of belief in what God said, a simple lack of ability to say, "This is what God says. This is what the Bible says. This is the principles of the Word of God, but I'm not going to live by Him today. I'm not going to believe Him today. I'm going to do my own thing. I'm going to go my own way."

*Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD.*

*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.*

God will always preserve the faithful. God will always take care of the one that does what's right. God's always going to give them what He promised them. He's not going to punish them because of the lack of faith of the nation.

*For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

You live carnally, you live by sight instead of by faith, it says it's death. But to be spiritually minded, to live by faith, it says is life and peace. Joshua and Caleb's lives were saved, and it says they were preserved, and they got to go into that Promised Land and see that land that God had for them because of their faith.

## IV. Caleb in the Wilderness

Alright, now let's look at the third thing here, and we're going to look now at Caleb in the wilderness. This is an interesting part and an interesting twist of the story, especially as it relates to Caleb being a picture of you and of me living as Christians in today's age. You see, Caleb was obedient to God. He was a faithful soldier. Deuteronomy 1:36 says he wholly followed the Lord,

and God promised him his inheritance. God told him that he was going to get that land that he had gone out and that he had seen, and because he had believed God's promise, God told him he was going to get it. But yet, look what happens to Caleb. He was still stuck wandering in the wilderness for 40 years with that unbelieving nation. He didn't get to go right in. Caleb was still stuck for 40 years walking around with an unbelieving, I mean, with dead men walking, basically, walking around waiting for all these guys to fall over and die because of their unbelief.

I mean, what must that have been like? What in the world must that have been like for somebody who loved Moses, who loved the Lord, and yet he had to endure every single day the murmuring and the complaining of the people, all the people that were spending their time saying, "Oh, I wish we were back in Egypt. It was better back then. We had fish to eat, and, you know, all we have here is this manna that God puts down every day in a miraculous way, you know, tons of it, enough to feed two million people, but, you know, it was better back in Egypt." He had to put up with that day after day after day after day for 40 years. Caleb was the one that believed God. Caleb was the one that had faith in God. Caleb was the one that was ready to go. He says, "Let's go. Let's go charge them out. Let's go take it right now."

No, see what Caleb here, Caleb is a picture of what we should be. Caleb here is a picture of a Philadelphian Christian stuck living in the Laodicean church, stuck wandering around for 40 years with a bunch of people that don't believe God. They don't really want to serve God. They don't really want to do anything for God that hate the things of God, that hate the Word of God, and are going to complain about it every day up one side and down the other. I bet Caleb spent time wishing, "God, why don't You just come? I mean, why don't You just come down and just wipe them out, and let's go?" All He had to do was snap His fingers, and God could have gotten rid of every single person that He wanted to, and they could have gone into the land. But no, no. Caleb probably had some things that he needed to learn, maybe. Certainly, if for no other reason, God put it in there so we can learn from it today.

So the question here is, how did Caleb maintain his spiritual life when surrounded by such carnality and unbelief for 40 years? He's walking around like a Philadelphian Christian in the Laodicean church period. How did he handle it? How in the world did he keep himself from falling down and from falling into it with everybody else? I'll tell you two things, two things that he did.

1. Caleb's heart was in Canaan the whole time.

Back there in Joshua 14:9, it says, "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." Caleb had a promise back from that day. Moses told him, he said, "Surely that land that your feet have trodden upon, it's going to be yours. It's going to be your inheritance, and it's going to be yours and your children's forever." So Caleb, for those 40 years, number one, his heart was always in Canaan. His feet were planted in the wilderness with a bunch of unbelievers, but his heart was in Canaan. He was always looking ahead.

You know, there's a rumor going around the church that I'm a little bit of a KU fan. I've heard some of you talking about it, and it's, uh, I'll go ahead and say it's true. So the question that I always get is, how in the world do you survive your miserable football team every single year? And they are miserable. I mean, they're awful. They just, like, it's like the worst ever. I got to be around all these Missouri fans, and your football team is really good, and my football team is really bad. So game after game, week after week, I watch them play, and they look like they couldn't even beat a high school team most days. How do I get through it? How do I survive? I'll tell you how, because in November, basketball season starts. Amen. Alright, praise the Lord. Basketball season starts in November, and it's not that I don't like my Jayhawks when they play football. I watch them, and I try, try to, and I cheer for them, but they're terrible, and it's awful, and it's painful. Yet I know that there's a day coming when Bill Self's going to walk out there in his suit and with his wig, and because I know he wears a toupee, but that's fine. It doesn't bother me that he wears a toupee because it looks good, and it's fine. Sometimes it gets a little messed up in the back, and I don't know what that's all about, but it's cool. It's no problem. But I know that they're going to be good. I know they're going to win conference championships. I know they're going to win games, and it's going to be lots of fun, and then it's easier, and it's all great.

I say all that to say, that's how Caleb did it. You go through the misery of the suffering that you have to go through because you've got your eye on a day that's coming that's better. If you've got your heart in Canaan, you don't have to worry about when you're stuck in the wilderness with a bunch of Laodicean Christians that don't really love the Lord. You get through every day because you know that someday you're going to be in a better place. Someday you're going to get to be with the Lord where you want to be.

*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

*For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

*When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

The key is set your affections on things above. Don't set your affections on things on this earth. You set your affections on things on this earth, and all you see is things on this earth, and there ain't nothing good to look at on this earth. There wasn't anything good to look at for Caleb as he walked around and he had to listen to the murmuring and he had to listen to the complaining. He set his affections on things above. He was thinking about, "Someday I'm going to be in that land. Someday I'm going to be on that mountain that God promised me, and I'm not going to let all these sorry people around me right now discourage me or get me down or get my eye off the prize that God has promised me." Caleb believed what God said that He would give it to him, and it's as simple as that. He believed that God said that the land that He promised him, that He was going to give it to him. So that's the first thing he did. His heart was in Canaan.

2. He stayed as far away from the mixed multitude as he possibly could.

Now, if you don't know who the mixed multitude is, as the Bible talks about a group

of people within Israel as they were as they were wandering through that wilderness, they weren't happy about anything. They hated everything that was going on. They wanted to go back to Egypt. They didn't like Moses. They didn't like Joshua. They didn't like God. They didn't like anything, and they let people know about it. They complained about it every day. They murmured, and they just caused problems, and they caused strife everywhere that they were. The Bible says where you could always find them, see, when Israel would set up camp, they set it up in a circle, and the ark was always right in the center, and the ark of course represents God. The ark, that's where God was, and the ark for you and I is going to represent God and the Word of God and what this church is doing from a ministry standpoint, and that was always right at the center. Then the families, they camped around that. They camped around that ark in a circle, and the mixed multitude, where you always found them, was as far away from that ark as they could get. The Bible says that they were always in the uttermost parts of the camp. They got as far away from the action as they could be.

So the solution to surviving in a Laodicean church when you got a bunch of people around that don't like anything about the Bible is to stay as far away from them as you can. You get to the center. You get where the action is. You get where that ark is. You find out what's this church doing, what ministries is God doing with this church. If it's Restart, that's where I'm going to be. I'm going to be there two Sundays a month, and if they change it to three, I'm going to be there three. If it's the mission, that's where I'm going to be. If it's flag football, that's where I'm going to be. Wherever it is, wherever the action is, wherever the Bible is being preached and it's being taught, that's where I'm going to be because I promise you that's not where the mixed multitude is going to be, and you can keep yourselves clear from.

You young Christians here today, I'm going to give you a warning. You need to be able to learn to recognize who the mixed multitude is. You need to be able to recognize not by the things that they say, but by the things that they do, and it's a principle that you've been taught. It's been hammered into your mind and in your ears over and over again. You learn to recognize who they are and understand sometimes it's your close friends, sometimes it's even your family, but you need to know who they are.

Did you ever notice something? Zach and I were talking about this a while ago. He was listening to a message, and I want to listen to it as a good preacher. Did you ever notice that so many times in the Bible that Jesus equates following Him and serving Him with leaving your family off behind? You know, you got to chuck them to the side.

*He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

You know, it's an interesting point because we think, "Well, gosh, I mean, it's a, it's, it's kind of a dichotomy, right? Because this is, this is the year we're talking about ministering with our family. So why are you sitting here saying that God says sometimes you got to leave your family?" Well, the ministering with your family part is about training your family, your wife, your children to serve the Lord and anybody else that's in your family that wants to serve the Lord. But what Jesus, what Christ is saying here is that your close friends and your family are the ones that

God's going to try to use to derail His plan in your life because you're not willing to cut ties with them. The ones that don't want anything to do with the Lord, the ones that don't have anything to do with the Bible, with the Word of God, or with the principles of the Bible, your inability to take a stand with your family or your friends, even people in this church, is going to destroy some of you spiritually. I guarantee it.

You know, Zach preached a message. I love talking about this because it always makes me laugh. They had a big family reunion a few years back, and so I guess they were all, they were doing like, this is like a talent show, right? Kind of like a family talent show. So Zach, Zach's talent is preaching, and he's good at it, and he got up and he preached a message about, uh, I think his intro, and I might mess it up, but don't, don't, don't correct me if I'm wrong, uh, because it, because it works with what I'm saying here. His intro, he's talking about how we talk, hey, how we don't say anything, how we like to talk about how blood is thicker than water, right? I mean, hey, you're at a family reunion, you got like 400 people there, whatever, that you're going to get some amens out of that. You're like, "Oh, amen, boy, I preach it." And, um, so he's like, and he got him, he's got him right in his hand at that point, and then he flipped it on him, and he said, and the, the message that he ended up preaching was basically, you know, we say blood is thicker than water, and we're talking about our family. We talk about our physical family as our as our blood, and water being, you know, our friends, and so you should always choose your family over your friends or anybody else. That's what we're all told from the time that, from the time that we're little, and to a certain extent that's true, but by and large, it's not. And the way that he went with it, I love. He said, "You know, the Bible talks about our physical birth as our as our water birth, you know, over there in John chapter 3, he compares, he talks about, and that's what I mean, right? For that, right before a woman gives birth, what happens? Her water breaks. You know, the water is what we call our blood family. My family here on this earth, that's water. The blood is my family, my new family that I have because of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ." And he said, "Oh, he didn't give him any amens when he got to that part." They didn't, they didn't like, they didn't like that part as much because what he basically said was, "Hey, you know what, you're my family, and I love you, but right up and to the point that you don't stand with me on that book and all the principles of that book, then I got nothing to do with you, and I'll leave you behind, and I won't worry about it, and I won't feel bad about it." And that's the truth of where we need to be with our family or with our friends or whoever it is. You got to be able to recognize who they are, and if they're not going the same direction you are, if they are not putting the principles of the Word of God in their lives, then boy, you better get away from them. You better get away from them as far as you can because they will drag you down every time. They will drag you down every time.

## V. Caleb the Conqueror

Now let's move on here, and I want to talk about this last point, and we're going to look at Caleb, Caleb the Conqueror. So we saw Caleb in the wilderness. We saw Caleb as he is in the wilderness, brought up in slavery, I mean in bondage, brought up in slavery, and God saved him from that. Then we saw Caleb in his faith as he saw and he brought the good report of the land. We talk about Caleb in the wilderness, how he's a picture of us as Laodicean Christians,

hopefully Philadelphian Christians, being forced to walk through a Laodicean church with a bunch of people that don't want anything to do with the Lord and still happen to keep our eyes on that prize and being able to separate ourselves from the ones that don't want to serve the Lord to keep them from bringing us down.

Then we look at this last aspect in Caleb's life, and we look at Caleb the Conqueror, and we go back to Joshua chapter 14. Here in Joshua 14, as I said earlier, they're done wandering now, right? We're done wandering, and they're in the land, and now they're starting to get their inheritance. In verses 6 through 9, and we read them earlier, Caleb here reminds Joshua, who's the type of Christ, about God's promise to give him the land, the land that he had walked on, the land that he had searched out for his inheritance, for his inheritance.

You know, I talked earlier about how we should be careful how we go to the Lord and the things that we ask for, and I meant that, and it was the truth that we're not to go to God with a with a shopping list of things that we want when we pray. But there are some things in the Bible that we can go to God. There are principles in the Bible that we can claim. There's there's victory that God's offered to us that we can claim, and that's what we should go to Him. We should go to Him with those principles that He's given us, and here this is what Caleb is doing with Joshua, who's a type of Christ. This is a picture of us going to Christ and saying, "God, in Your Bible, You promise me this. You promise me this, and You promise me this, and I'm asking for You to give it to me." And those are those are questions, those are requests that God will gladly honor because those are principles out of the Word, out of the book that He gave to us. This is not me saying, "This is what I think I need, Lord. I'm going to tell You the things that I want." This is me taking the things that He's given to me, that He's promised to me, and then claiming those promises for my own. Yet the problem that so many of us have is we never spend any time in the book, and we never get any of these promises. We don't have a personal relationship with the Lord where He can show us these things. We don't have the relationship with God that Caleb had to go into that land and spy it out and see it for what it is and see it for what God had promised him and then claim that victory and claim that inheritance that He that He'd promised to him. But that's what we need to do. That's where we need to be.

Then look at verses 10 and 11 here. He says, I love this part. He says, he's he's 85 years old now. 85 years old. I'm 38 years old, and I'm not playing in the flag football league because I can't run from here to there anymore without like just hurting and being sore for no apparent reason. I like to think it's because I injured myself last summer, but I don't. I think it's just because I'm out of shape, and I'm getting old now, and that's 38. Like, I know I referee the games, and I run around for two hours, sort of. It's like a half jog. I don't really run. Cleon got on me for it yesterday, and it's like a half jog, and afterwards I'm walking back to the car like my legs hurt, and like my feet hurt, and I'm thinking, "What in the world is wrong with me? 38 years old." It's ridiculous. And here's Caleb, 85 years old, and it says his strength, you know, his strength has not faltered one bit. His strength hasn't waned at all, and it says he's ready to claim his inheritance.

You know, it's interesting. Most Christians allow old age to make complainers out of them instead of the conquerors that they ought to be, the conqueror that Caleb became. We get in our old age, I'm not even just talking about physically, I'm really talking about spiritually at this

point. We get around for 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 years that we've been saved, and we're tired, and we find ourselves just being complainers about everything that's going on. We get upset about these young Christians running around that they think they know it all, and we try to discourage them instead of encourage them. It's amazing what happens in Christianity as we get old. Yet here's Caleb, 85 years old, and instead of being a complainer, he's a conqueror. He's got all the strength he says that he had when he was a young man.

In verse 12, what does he say? He says, "Give me this mountain." That same mountain that he had his eye on for those 40 years that he was wandering in the wilderness. You know, I wonder sometimes if he could see it far off. I wonder sometimes because when you when you look at the at your maps in the Bible and you see, I mean, it's a pretty big area where they were, but that that wilderness that they wandered in, it's kind of crazy to think that for 40 years that they wandered around. I mean, it's really clear that they basically wandered because that's where God wanted to be because in 40 years, I mean, you'd, you know, you'd find yourself somewhere, you know, but God just sort of contained him and stuck him where he where he wanted him to be. But I bet there were times where they got out maybe into a little clearing, and Caleb could see off in the distance. I bet he could see that mountain. I bet he could see it sticking away, it's sticking way up above the horizon, and he thought, "That's the mountain. That's that mountain that God promised me. That's that mountain that got him through." And here he is in verse 12, and he says to he says to Joshua, he says, "Give me this mountain," and he says, "I'll be able to drive them out," talking about those giants.

See, what I also love is that in that land, he said there were, you know, there's the Jebusites over here and the Amorites, and I'm going to get the names all wrong, and there's all these different groups of people there, but said the sons of Anak were up on that mountain that he that he wanted. That's those were the giants, the sons of Anak, and that was the place that he wanted. He picked the hardest place to go and take, the one that had the 12-foot tall giants, and it said there were three of them, and that doesn't mean there were three giants. That means there were three families of giants, okay? So that's that's a lot of that's a lot of giants to go up and take care of, and he says, "You know what, I'm going to go and drive him out." 85 years old, and because he knew that he had God on his side, right? The same God that had promised it to him 40 years earlier, the same God that said that had him ready to go and and charge that hill 40 years ago is the same God that was that was still on his side and that had preserved him all through that time in the wilderness and it was given given given to him.

You know, Caleb, the key with him here is he always had his height set high because it kept his eyes off of all the distractions that were around him. You know, walking through that wilderness, there's distractions everywhere. I talked about the mixed multitude. I talked about all the murmurings and the complaining and all the people that were trying to derail what God wanted to do and that were trying to to cause problems and it caused strife. Caleb always kept his eyes up high. He always kept his eyes up above the fray because he kept his eyes on that mountain that God had given to him.

You know, we think about, we hear it all the time, if somebody's up, you know, on a tightrope, what do we always tell them? "Don't look down," right? If you're up, if you're afraid of heights,

whatever you do, don't look down. You look down, that's when you're going to fall. That's when you're going to get get screwed up. When you're playing, you're playing basketball, you're shooting a jump shot, somebody puts their hand up in your face, what do you got to do? You got to look past their hand, look over their hand, keep your eyes on the goal, keep your eyes on that basket the whole time when you shoot it. You take your eyes off the basket, you start looking at the defender, you're never going to make that shot.

I think about even yesterday, I thought of this one when it was happening, Stephen here, more Steve, yeah. Alright, you guys got, if you don't do anything else, I mean, if you don't come out for a bowl of chili, come out for the, uh, for the Turkey Bowl just so you can watch Stephen play. He's like, he's like, I don't even know how to describe him. He's like an alien or something. He never misses the flag. Like, you watch other guys, somebody gets the ball, they go running, and they're fumbling. Everybody's fumbling for it, and you see guys will go through six people. Everybody grabs for a flag, and they miss it, and they score a touchdown. You're like, "How in the world does somebody not get his flag?" Stephen can be, if he's within like five feet, you're done. You might as well just stop and just take it off and hand it to him. He's got these like cat-like reflexes. If anybody's close to him, he just grabs it. You think that he doesn't have it, and he's just waving. He's like, "Yeah, I got it." And we were joking with him about it, but you know what he said, and he's right. He was teasing when he said it, but what makes him so good at it is he doesn't look at anything else but the flag. He doesn't look at the guy's eyes, his head, his feet. He don't look at anything. He just looks at that flag, and that's all he's focused on, and he dives for the flag. He doesn't care where the guy's running, where he's got the ball, or anything else. That's exactly what we're supposed to do in our Christian lives. You keep your eyes focused on exactly what they need to be focused on, and you don't get caught off by any of the distractions that are going on around you. You don't get caught looking off to the sideline to see if anybody's watching you and cheering for you. You keep your eye on the prize like Caleb did. Caleb had his eyes on that mountain the whole time, and when it came down to it, he was ready to claim it.

Caleb got victory because of the faith that he had in God.

*He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*

*And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

Now I know this is talking about Abraham, but this is certainly fitting, and this applies to Caleb here. It says, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able to perform." Like I said, those verses there are talking about Abraham and the faith that he had, but that those verses could talk about Caleb, and those verses should describe you, and they should describe me, that we should be able to walk through our daily lives and be persuaded that that what God has promised, that He's going to be able to perform.

*For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

Some of our problems is number one, we don't really know whom we believed in. We don't really know God. You know, we know that we're saved, or maybe we hope that we're saved. We don't live like we're saved always, so, you know, it makes you wonder. But we know we don't know God. We don't really know who we believed in. We don't really know the promises that He's given us. We don't really know what this book has said. But he says here, "I know whom I believed in and am persuaded." We don't know, and we're not persuaded. We're not persuaded that this book really says what it really means what it says. We're not persuaded that God really means what He says, that God really expects out of us what He expects out of us, that God's really going to hold us accountable to the things that He says He's going to hold us accountable to. But brother, let me tell you, He does, and He means it, and there's a judgment seat coming for each and every one of us if you're saved here today that we're going to face someday, and we're going to answer, and we're going to be held accountable for the things that we did or the things that we didn't do, and the attitude that we had with it, and whether we operated by faith or whether we operated by sight.

So here in Joshua, as we go to chapter 15 and verse 13 and 14, at 85 years of age, he drives out those giants.

*And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron.*

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

*And he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before was Kirjathsepher.*

*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, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.*

So 85 years old, this old man goes up probably with just a sword in his hand. Maybe he had a shield. I don't know. Maybe he didn't need it. And he goes up and he drives out these giants out of that land, and he says, he says, "Guys, this this this piece of land belongs to me. It's not yours anymore. God gave it to me, and it's time to take a hike." With God's help, it says he drove those giants out of that land.

Then just for good measure, I love this. Look at verses 16 and 17. God throws this in there for us just for good measure. Now we see him leading and influencing his family at the same time.

*And he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before was Kirjathsepher.*

*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, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.*

So here's Caleb's nephew, who he obviously had had some sort of an impact on because he was going through the same wilderness that that Caleb was going through. Yet Caleb must have had some sort of an influence. I bet Caleb was telling him all about it. Caleb was telling him, "Oh, boy, you got to see this. There's a there's this land out there that God promised to us. You're too young. You wouldn't remember, uh, but the only reason you're still alive is because you were too young, so you can thank the Lord for that. But God's got something for us. Just wait till you see it." So when it came time, and Caleb said, "Hey, whoever wants to go and take that land right there, I'll give you my daughter to wife." Now we don't quite do things like that nowadays, but the principle is the principle there is he had had an influence on his nephew, and there was no hesitation. In verse 17, it says, "And Othniel the son of of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it." It says he went up and took it. He didn't go to a vote. He didn't go to his friends and see what their opinion was about it, see what they thought about it. He said, "Oh, I know what this is. I remember him talking about this. I remember him saying God who promises to us. Yeah, let's go. I can get a wife to boot. Let's do it." And he goes and he takes the land, and he gets it, and he gets a wife out of it.

So what a tremendous example, though, of Caleb not only staying faithful for himself but having an influence on his family. This is what we're talking about. This is what Bob's been preaching about all year long about leading your family, about setting an example, about leaving a legacy. Talk about a legacy. You know what ended up happening with Othniel? Oh, not much. Not much. He just ends up over there in Judges chapter 3 becoming the first judge that God brings up after Joshua to lead the nation of Israel. Yeah, not much. Caleb didn't do a heck of a lot in his life to make a difference. No, Caleb was a conqueror who used physical weapons to claim material possessions, just like we should use spiritual weapons to claim a spiritual victory in Christ, and we should be conquerors.

But what's the key? I said this earlier. The key is knowing what God said and what He promised us and then believing it, believing that what God said, that He actually meant it.

*For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

I mean, we sing a hymn about it. It's one of my favorite hymns, "Faith is the Victory," right?

*But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

All we got to do is claim the victory that Christ has already won. I mean, He's already won it. We're sitting there. It's right there for us. All we have to do is go to Him and claim it. All we got to do is go and ask Him for it, but we got to believe that He's going to give it to us. Don't miss the grapes that are out there because all you see are the giants. See, the 10 men that went out and spied the land, they missed the grapes because all they could see were the giants. We need to go through life, and we need to be like Caleb and Joshua and ignore the giants because all we see are the grapes. I mean, all I see out there are the blessings that God has for me. I'm going to

ignore these obstacles. I'm going to ignore these giants. I'm going to ignore these enemies of God that are out here because all I see are these blessings that are here that God's promised me. All I see are these tremendous things that God wants me to have.

I'm going to close with this. You know, this one last thought that I want to leave you with, and you know, this is maybe what I like most about this story. You know, when you look at this, and you look at Caleb, and I don't mean this to be a, I don't understand how I mean this when I say this. You know, Caleb was just a guy, right? Caleb was just, he was just a regular old foot soldier. He was just a faithful soldier for the Lord. He was not necessarily, I talked at the very beginning when I first started preaching, I talked about God's plan, and the theme for this Bible is about a kingdom, right? Caleb didn't necessarily play an integral part in anything, any part of God's plan as it pertains to that kingdom, and I don't mean to be flippant about it. I mean, I just preached a whole message on his life, so you got to understand where I'm coming from.

My point is that Caleb never became the leader of Israel. That was Joshua. It went from Moses to Joshua. Caleb certainly had an influence, like we talked about his nephew that that he had brought along became the next judge after Joshua, but Caleb was never a part of it. Caleb never got that seat up in front of the congregation as, "I'm the leader here. Here I am. Take a look at me and follow me." All Caleb was was just a guy that was just faithful. Caleb was just a soldier that just believed God enough to obey Him and do what He said. There was no fanfare. There was no glory. The Bible just says that several times that Caleb just wholly followed the Lord. I think you see it five or six times in there when you study his life out that it says he wholly followed the Lord.

You know what? At the end of the day, that that's that's all I really want to be. All I really want to be is somebody who's just faithful to the very end, and somebody could say about me at the end of my life, whenever that may be, that he wholly followed the Lord. You know, anything that that God allows me to do in ministry would carry on tomorrow. I have no doubt if I wasn't here, if God took me home tonight, anything that I do, any little part that I play, would go on without missing a beat. Athletics ministry, Darren's ready to do it right now. He'd probably do it better than me if I gave it to him, but I don't want to because I got to have something to do around here. So Darren would take it over without without missing a step. Zach already does a better job than I do leading music. Anything that I do around here would carry on with no problems whatsoever.

What I love about this story about Caleb, it's sort of the same thing. If Caleb wasn't one of the spies that went into spy the land, Joshua still would have been there. Joshua still would have brought back the same report. Joshua was one that ended up becoming the leader, but yet there Caleb was there. He was given the opportunity that God gave him to be faithful, and he sees that opportunity. You know, you've heard Bob say, and he and it was something that Mel used to say, that, you know, we all want to be that chandelier in the main ballroom, and none of us ever want to be the the light on the back porch. That's all we should really want to be. That's all I ever want to be at the end of the day. You know, we talk about how we should dare to be a Daniel, and and we should, and we talk about how we should live and and preach like Paul, and we definitely should. But at the end of the day, I pray to the Lord, "You know what, God, just let me be like Caleb. Just let me be somebody who's just content just to serve You. Let me be a soldier that's

unwavering, that believes this book, that will never compromise on its promises, and that's content just to claim what God's promised me, nothing more, nothing less, because I wholly followed the Lord." That's all I want to be.

Caleb got to the end, and he didn't say, "Hey, Joshua, you know, I was kind of a big deal back there. I don't know if you really remember, but I was kind of a pretty good help to you, uh, when we were trying to do that thing back there with Israel. So, um, let's say we, uh, I don't know, you know, make me like number two or something. That kind of has a nice ring to it. Caleb, my vice president." No, he didn't say any of that. The only thing Caleb wanted, he just wanted that mountain that God had promised him, and Caleb went up and he claimed it, and he lived his life out on that mountain, that promised that blessing that God had had given to him from the very beginning and had promised to him 40 years beforehand, and he was content with that. That's all I want to be. I want to be found at the end of my life faithful. I don't want to be somebody that needs to be in the spotlight. I don't want to be somebody that needs to be up in front, that needs to be in charge of anything. I just want to be the guy like Caleb that was just faithful and believed God, did what God told him to do, and then got the blessing and got the promises that God had promised him because of that faith.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, we love You and we thank You for all You do for us. Again, Lord, I just thank You so much for the messages You've given given me today and the opportunity to preach it here. I know.