



Christ's Commission Fellowship

Los Angeles

DGROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE
MAY 18, 2014

Whole-hearted to the End

Now the people of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the Lord said to Moses the man of God at Kadesh Barnea about you and me. I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land. And I brought him back a report according to my convictions, but my fellow Israelites who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt in fear. I, however, followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly. So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly

Joshua 14:6-9

Caleb and Joshua were two of the 12 spies who were sent out by Moses to look at the Promised Land, Canaan, of the 12 only the two of them gave promising reports according to their convictions, the rest gave discouraging reports. Now forty five years after, Caleb goes to Joshua. Caleb, as you can see from Scripture, was not an Israelite. He was in fact a foreigner. This is important to note because he had been elected by his tribe to become their representative as a spy to go to Canaan. This clearly shows that Caleb was put in high esteem and in good confidence by his tribe and this was because of his inherent character.

As Caleb recalls the day that they came back with a good report, there was actually a blessing that came with that. God had promised through Moses that when the Israelites eventually entered the land, that God will give him the portion of the land that he had spied out. Caleb has not forgotten what God has promised to do.

Most of us are like Caleb, when we first start out in our Christian faith we are so excited about our faith and we cant wait to tell everyone about what we have come into. We are so passionate and courageous, but unfortunately for some of us this passion and courage seem to dwindle as time passes instead of getting stronger. We often forget that when we step out in faith, God will honor that and God can use us in ways we can never imagine God can.

Caleb, on the other hand, he remained passionate and courageous for the Lord. At 85, he still has faith and confidence that he can do whatever God calls him to do.

We see the promise God made in Numbers 13:26-30 *they proceeded to come to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land. Thus they told him, and said, "We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there. Amalek is living in the land of the Negev and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan. Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it."*

While everyone else was discouraging the Israelite nation from going into Canaan and claiming the land, Caleb stood up and quieted the people. He believed and had confidence that since God had promised the land to them, there was nothing the current inhabitants can do to stop the Israelites from claiming the land. In essence, he was saying that if God was with them, then they can do anything.

Don't you wish we have the same faith, the same confidence, the same wholehearted assurance as Caleb has? Not having this wholehearted confidence restrains us from accomplishing the things that God wants us to do. Because of our anxieties, our fears, our lack of faith – we cannot be used by God in the way He wants to. That was not Caleb.

Caleb believed that despite the risks, despite the obstacles he can do whatever it was that God had called him to do. Unlike most of the Israelites, who followed the Lord only when it was easy. . . Caleb followed the Lord wholeheartedly even when there were difficulties, even when there were obstacles, Caleb continued to follow the Lord with his whole heart.

Even today we find ourselves in situations like this – becoming fair weathered Christians. Only willing to follow and obey God when everything runs smoothly in our lives then the moment that trials appear, we lose heart and lose faith.

In Numbers 14:24 the Lord says “**but because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.**” This shows us that if we remain faithful and wholehearted, God sees that and He will reward us accordingly.

Many times we miss out on the blessings of God because in difficult circumstances, we capitulate, we despair. . . we stop pursuing God. . . we get so caught up in our problems that we lose the opportunity to be blessed by God. Caleb, because he was wholehearted, even though it was still a distant promise – Caleb held strong.

Now, on his 85th year of age, the Israelites had been at war with the inhabitants of Canaan for 5 years but the land that had been promised to Caleb had not been captured. The Israelites had chosen to capture the easy areas first, leaving this part of the land for last since it was inhabited by giants. But Caleb remembered God's promise – God did not promise that it was going to be easy but God promised that He would win the battle. He tells Joshua in Joshua 14:10-12 **Now behold, the LORD has let me live, just as He spoke, these forty-five years, from the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, when Israel walked in the wilderness; and now behold, I am eighty-five years old today. ¹¹ I am still as strong today as I was in the day Moses sent me; as my strength was then, so my strength is now, for war and for going out and coming in. ¹² Now then, give me this hill country about which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day that Anakites were there, with great fortified cities; perhaps the LORD will be with me, and I will ¹³drive them out as the LORD has spoken.”**

Even though he was not physically as strong at 85, but Caleb continued to be strong in the Lord. God working through us is not bound by our human limitations, since God works supernaturally. When God gave Caleb the promise, there was no accompanying timetable, He did not specify a specific time when it would happen. . . God did not give him the promise at 40 when he was still physically strong and could accomplish it with his strength. God fulfilled the promise when he was 85, the claim to the land was not dependent on Caleb's strength or skill – the fulfillment of the promise depended on God's strength.

Many times we are unwilling to take risks for the Lord because we think it is up to us – our strength, our knowledge, our skills, our talents. . . we are forgetting that it is not really about us, it is all about Him. His strength, His grace working through us.

Caleb knew that if God wanted him to take that mountain, he could. Not because of his physical strength and capabilities but because God had promised this land to him. Caleb knew that God would drive out the Anakites who lived there. Caleb reclaimed the promise – he recalls that God had promised to keep him and Joshua alive; that God has kept him strong, and that he knew that God would help him drive out the Anakites.

So Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance. So Hebron has belonged to Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite ever since, because he followed the LORD, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly. (Joshua 14:13-14)

On hearing a story like this, the next part of the story you would like to hear is how the battle was won. But that story was not included – because the real battle was not with the Anakites. The real battle was whether a person could wholeheartedly trust God in fulfilling His promise.

Caleb trusted God wholeheartedly. . . and so the story of how Hebron was captured didn't really matter. . . because Caleb knew and believed that God would deliver on His promise. And because of his faith, Caleb was able to claim his inheritance for his family.

The question for us today is -- can we be like Caleb and trust God wholeheartedly?

Or do we prefer to insist to do it on our own effort?

God will fulfill His plans, whether we want to participate in His plans or not. There is so much work to be done for the Kingdom of God, the question remains is – would we trust God wholeheartedly and let Him work in us and through us.

Works: Journaling task

1. How do you plan to finish your life?
2. What is in your spiritual bucket list?
3. What conquests are you preparing for today?
4. Are you willing to be like Caleb and follow God wholeheartedly for the rest of your life?