



Dgroup Discussion Guide for September 17, 2017 Radical Duo

Scripture: Numbers 13-14

Our problems are indirectly proportional to the size of our God. If you have a big God, what you believe to be a big problem is actually small. The same is true the other way around: if you believe that you have a small God, then you tend to magnify your problem. This is exemplified in Numbers 13. After Moses sent some Israelites to scout the land of Canaan, they came back with good news and bad news. The good news was that the land the Lord had promised to them was rich beyond what they could imagine; the bad news, however, was that it was already occupied by intimidating peoples. While the rest of the group was disheartened by the news, Caleb put forward a radical perspective by telling them to immediately go forward despite the setbacks.

It's important, therefore, to have the right perspective about who God is. When the other spies went to the Israelites with a report that focused on the problems ahead, the people began to doubt God instead of holding on to his promises to them. In fact, they were so discouraged that they even blamed Moses and Aaron and declared that they would rather just go back to living as slaves in Egypt than face their situation.

In the midst of the Israelites' complaints, Joshua and Caleb—both of whom were included to spy on the land—held onto their faith. They addressed the congregation, saying in Numbers 14:7-9, "***The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them.***"

The radical duo of Joshua and Caleb had a radical perspective because they remembered God's radical promise to Moses. The Lord says in Genesis 17:6-8, "***I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. I will give to you and your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.***"

The Israelites did not listen to Joshua and Caleb, and instead made a move to stone them before God intervened. Their actions brought about a radical outcome: the Lord said to the Israelites that although their children will experience Canaan, they themselves will not get to set foot on the promised land. The Lord says in Numbers 14:33-34, "***Your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they will suffer for your unfaithfulness, until your corpses lie in the wilderness. According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, even forty years, and you will know My opposition.***" The Lord is a loving and faithful God, but he is also a just God.

Despite the punishment given to the Israelites, God proves that he is still a gracious God. Deuteronomy 29:5 says, "***I have led you for forty years in the wilderness; your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandal has not worn out on your foot.***" The Lord still continued to lead them as they lived out the consequences of their actions. He stayed true to his promise that He would be with them.

Just like Joshua and Caleb, we are called to live with a radical perspective. Even if we believe ourselves to be good people, we have to remember that all of us are sinners. However, God's radical promise is that all who call on his name are saved. This, then, results in a radical product of the impossible becoming possible in the name of the Lord.

APPLICATION:

Patiently listen as God reveals where you can apply the passage's lesson in your life. Write down specific action points to what He has revealed to you.

1. Is there something in your life you are struggling with? Is there a trial? A problem? What is your perspective of God? Which is bigger --- your problem or God?
2. How much do you trust God? Do you believe in His promises? Is there a particular promise that you are hanging on to?
3. Is there something that God is telling you to entrust to Him? What is holding you back?
4. Can we be like Joshua and Caleb – to continue to live our live practicing a radical perspective on all that happens in our life?

PRAYERS:

Lift all the things that you learned back to God. Share your thoughts to Him. If He is impressing a sin in your life, confess it to Him. He is always ready to forgive.