



Facing the Future with Faith, not Fear - Joshua 14:5-14

Sermon Outline

A one-off sermon on faith, not fear, given the many changes and risks in church at the moment. Caleb was one of the 12 spies sent into the land when Israel first came out of Egypt. He and Joshua alone had faith. Now in Joshua 14 it's 45 years later but he still has faith and receives his inheritance. It encourages us to likewise have faith. 3 applications:

1. Wholly Follow the Lord
2. Follow for the long run
3. Trust God is with us

Reading: Joshua 14:5-14, with background in Numbers 13:25-14:9 when Israel first came to the border of the promised land and sent in spies.

Questions

1. This is a season with lots of change as a church. How do you feel about it? What excites you? Anything uncertain that makes you fearful?

We're trying to move venue, started an afternoon service and more. Good to talk about it together as I'm sure the uncertainty will get to some people.

2. Read the background in **Numbers 13:25-14:9**. How do you feel about Caleb and Joshua vs the other spies? What makes the difference?

Faith. The other spies only saw how big the inhabitants of the land were. They never considered God in their assessment, so they were afraid. On the other hand, Caleb and Joshua had faith that God was with them, so no matter how tall the inhabitants of the land, they knew they would receive the promised land.

(In reading this, don't forget that these people just came out of Egypt about a year ago. They saw the 10 plagues and walked through the Red Sea. They saw God on Mt Sinai and received miraculous manna every single day. We shouldn't feel sympathetic to them as you might feel sympathy for e.g. the disciples in the boat with Jesus.)

3. Compare this with **Joshua 14:6-14** and Caleb's speech. What were the past 45 years like for him? How do you feel about his faith?



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Caleb spent 38 years wandering meaninglessly in the desert while all his contemporaries died. Then he spent 7 years fighting wars. You could imagine him growing bitter or entitled. Yet he continued in faith and is willing to follow the Lord whatever he asks. Quite an inspiration.

4. What does it mean to 'wholly' follow the Lord? When might this be difficult (compared to 'partially' following the Lord)? Give some examples

We are OK to follow Jesus when it is easy and comfortable. It is when it is more difficult that we settle for partial following. But partial following is not following at all. If we truly trust God we should be able to do all that he asks of us.

5. If you're older: how do you find following Christ in the long run? What advice would you give young Christians? (If no one: any good examples you've seen?)

A chance to share. If there are no older Christians, maybe people can share what they have seen. E.g. keep going with devotions and community, even when life is busy with kids, senior job positions etc. Many older Christians don't do that, life is just too busy, and their faith shrivels.

6. Caleb's faith is that "The LORD is with us" though he often says "If..." (e.g. Joshua 14:12). How can we be even more sure than Caleb of God's presence?

The gospel :-). Caleb trusted God, but the overall context was the Law. Disobedience meant God's curse (e.g. Josh. 7). As Christians however, God showed his love for us in sending his Son while we were still sinners (Rom 5:8) so how much more will he give us everything (Rom 8:32). We can have greater assurance than Caleb ever could.

7. How does God's presence with us address the fears of question 1? What would it look like for us to move forward like Caleb in these changes happening?

Applying it to the fears of question 1. E.g. giving up our time & money to moving to a new venue. Risky but if we know God is with us and is committed to reaching more people with the gospel, we can trust in his character.