

Series: Joshua

When Faith Stands Alone

Numbers 13:26-14:9

Sermon by Lead Pastor Paul Joslin

Waterstone Community Church, Littleton, Colorado

Sunday morning, July 19, 2026

Please stand for a reading of the word. A reading from Numbers 13:26 through 14:9: “They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. They gave Moses this account: ‘We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey. Here is its fruit, but the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the Negev. The Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country, and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.’ Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, ‘We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it,’ but the men who had gone up with him said, ‘We can’t attack those people. They are stronger than we are,’ and they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, ‘The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there.’ The descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim. ‘We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.’ That night, all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, ‘If only we had died in Egypt or in this wilderness. Why is the Lord bringing us to this land, only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?’ and they said to each other, ‘We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.’ Then Moses and Aaron fell face-down in front of the whole Israelite assembly gathered there. Joshua, son of Nun, and Caleb, son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes and said to the entire Israelite assembly, ‘The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, He will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the Lord, and do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them.’” The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated.

Paul: Can we thank David and Lauren one more time for all their ministry, all their work? We are so grateful. If you would like to hear more about what God is doing in them and through them, and they have two little girls, they will be right outside these doors and to the left when you leave today. Let me go ahead and pray for us, and then we are going to dive into this morning’s text. Heavenly Father, Lord God, we come before you today, and Lord, we are honestly just humbled by what you are doing at Waterstone. God, I think of even just some of the stories that have come out the last few weeks as we have walked through the series on your Holy Spirit and just encountering the third person of the Trinity. God, as we now venture into this new book, the book of Joshua and of Ruth over the next few weeks, Lord, I just pray that same Spirit we have been encountering would continue to meet us. Lord, we pray that the pages of

scripture today would be alive and active. We pray that your Spirit would just cause them to jump off of the page so that we could encounter you in our own stories, and it is in Christ's name we pray, amen.

The first time that I jumped off a moving vehicle, yeah, great start, right? I remember my feet leaving the back of my mom's minivan and about two seconds too late, thinking, "This was a bad idea. Like, I should not have done this," and what you need to know is that when I climbed onto the back of this moving car and thought I was going to jump off, in my mind, I thought I was going to land like an action hero, like keep the momentum going, run, and then just like plant both feet and like look amazing, and instead, I looked like someone had tossed a bag of laundry out the back of a car and just crumpled. I stress-fractured my elbow, and then I had to explain to my high school basketball coach, yes, I was in high school at the time, why I couldn't play basketball anymore. If you are thinking, "Wow, that was a really dumb decision, Paul. You should know not to do that," that was not the first time I had jumped off of something and regretted it.

You could back up a couple years before, and I was a high school kid, freshman in high school, who was on a ski trip with our youth group out to Crested Butte, Colorado, during the winter break, and I remember standing at the top of a mountain, looking down at this jump, and thinking, "You know what? This is not a launch ramp for me. This is my destiny. Like, this is what I was born for," and so I went down the mountain, and I hit that ramp, and again, somewhere in the air, I realized that, "Oh my goodness, that is not soft, pillowy snow beneath me. That is like packed, hard, icy," and that was the point that I landed and broke my tailbone, and there is nothing cooler than a fifteen-year-old with a donut on their backside outside for a sixteen-hour bus ride home from Colorado, again, to explain to their freshman coach why they couldn't play basketball for a little while.

If you are thinking, "Wow, two examples, he probably learned his lesson there," no, I could go back even further to a time when I was about thirteen years old, and I was at my friend's house. His name was Nathan, and Nathan had a trampoline, and he had a house, as one does, and for some reason, our 13-year-old brains thought those two things went together like peanut butter and jelly, and so we figured out a way to climb onto the top of his house. Thankfully, just like so thankful to God, it was one story, not two stories, and we decided, "You know what? Let's just stand on the edge of this house and jump off onto the trampoline," and as I looked off the precipice of this house onto the trampoline, like every calculation in my mind came back green light. It was just like, no question, this is what I should do, and so I jumped, and I hit the trampoline, and many of you know this about trampolines, but they work. Like if you put a certain amount of energy and force into those trampolines, it will work. It'll send that right back, but what my brain had not calculated is that it does not always cause you to land where you landed the first time, and so I found myself flying over the trampoline, out of the trampoline, and about to introduce my neck to the ground, and that was the moment that I thought, "This was a bad idea. I should not have done this."

Now here is the thing. Many of us have moments in life. You have probably not done all of the dumb things that I have done, but you have probably had moments where you have thought, "I should not have done that. I wish I could have that moment back," and it is three different stories with three different jumps, but there is one emotion happening in every single one of those, and it is the emotion, the thought of regret, of wishing there was some sort of rewind button that I could get my feet planted back on the ground on safety and not make the decision I had just made, and now for you, maybe your regret looks a

little bit different. Maybe it is not jumping off the back of your mom's minivan when you are sixteen years old and old enough to know better. I just saw Bertie shaking her head at me. I love that so much. I just caught that out of the corner of my eye. Your regret might look a little different than that, and it might look like something that you said that you wish you could take back. It might look like a conversation you knew you needed to have, and you just procrastinated and prolonged it until it was too late. Sometimes regret for us looks like the moments when we did something that we immediately realized, "I should not have done this," and sometimes regret for us looks like the moment when we did not do the thing that we knew we should do.

I think that if I were to ask you to go back and to think of your life and to think of a moment where you had that feeling of regret, that moment, "I should not have done this. I should not have said that. I should not have gone here." I am guessing that almost every single person in this room has a moment that they can think of. It is that moment that you wish you could press the rewind button on. It is that moment that you wish you could just go back in time, and if you could talk to yourself, you would give yourself the instructions that you need not to make the same mistake, and here is the reality about regret. It is that regret is one of those haunting things, because in the moment, it made perfect sense. Every signal came back green light, and even if you were trying to read the signs, and maybe there were some warnings that you should not do the thing, you disregarded them, because what you wanted to do made more sense. It was what you wanted, and tragically, sometimes those are the moments when we refused to see what was in front of us clearly. It is that mid-air experience when you realize it is too late, and there is no going back, and it turns out mid-air is a terrible time to see clearly.

So let me ask you a question, and I just want to ask this very straight, and I want you to answer this not out loud, but in your mind. If you could take back a moment in your life, rewind the tape, hit the do-over button, erase everyone's memory in your life, do you know what moment you would choose? Do you know what moment you would go back to? I do. My guess is that you do too, because that is the strange thing about regret. We do not really file it away deep in the storage banks of our memory. It really stays close. It is one of the things that come back to us pretty frequently, and I want you to hold onto that moment today as we walk through this story, and I want you to keep it nearby, because I think every one of us has one of those moments. Every one of us has a moment that we wish if God just handed us the car keys to time, and we could go back to any moment in our lives, we know exactly the moment that we would go back to, and if some of you are like me, there is maybe more than one.

I want to sit in that moment, because I believe the story that we are looking at today, the story of Joshua and Caleb at the border of the Promised Land, it is one of the stories in the Old Testament that I think might be maybe the single most regretted decision in the entire Old Testament, and what makes this story so unnerving and so important to you and me is that in the moment, in their minds, the choice they made, made absolutely perfect sense. They thought they were being smart and careful and reasonable and realistic, and then midair, they realized, "We should not have done this."

So come back with me to the edge of the desert, to a place called Kadesh Barnea. Everybody say, "Kadesh Barnea." That was great. You guys are Hebrew scholars. Some of you have maybe never heard this story before, but I want to catch you up to speed on where we are. It is the story of the people of Israel, who were enslaved in Egypt, and they were brought out of the land of Egypt by God. They had been

enslaved for four-hundred years, crying out to God for Him to deliver them, and then finally God did. He showed up in power. He was not subtle about their deliverance at all. We are talking rivers of blood, darkness at noon, frogs over the entire land of Egypt. He showed up in power, delivered them from slavery, brought them into the wilderness, where they came to the Red Sea, and their enemies were behind them. God parted the sea, the people walked through on dry land, and God closed the sea behind them on their enemies, and then God brought them to a mountainside, where He said, I have done all of this. All of this has been done to bring you to me, so that I can take you to your home, to the Promised Land, where I will be your God, and you will be my people, and we will live together in harmony as father and son, and this is the moment that they had been waiting for. God kept them at this mountain for a year and a half or a little more while He taught them what it would be like to be in relationship with Him, and then He brought them to the very edge of the Promised Land, and they have been waiting for this moment for over four-hundred years for God to fulfill his promise. Kadesh Barnea, they come to this moment and to this place, and they are just about to enter the land, and God tells them to send twelve spies into the land so that they can look and explore, see the cities, see the fortifications, see who their enemies are, but also to see how good the land is and to bring back a report of how good the promised land is for the people. It is this idea that they are supposed to be encouraged by what they are about to step into.

So, the twelve spies, they leave, and for forty days they wander through the Promised Land, spying on the land, and then they come back, and they give this report to Moses and to the people after forty days. Numbers 13:27 through 29: “They gave Moses this account. ‘When we went into the land to which you sent us, it does flow with milk and honey, and here is its fruit.’” Now they came back, and what we are told is the fruit was so bountiful in this land that they took a cluster of grapes that they had to carry on a pole between two men because it was about the size of a child. I mean, it is just abundant, and it is everything they have ever dreamed of, and as they are declaring this, you could imagine all of the people just laughing, crying, grabbing each other, shaking. It is finally true. We are finally about to enter into the Promised Land, and then comes this word, “but the people who lived there are powerful, and the cities are fortified, and they are very large, and we even saw descendants of Anak there,” and you may not know that name, but essentially the Anakim were giants. They were men of old that grandmas told the stories about to children to make them go to bed on time. They were the boogeyman that was intended to just like freak everybody out. They were there. We saw them. They are real, and they are powerful, and beyond that, they say there are enemies on every side. Everywhere we looked, all of the country had people who were bigger than we are, stronger than we are. They are already in the land, and we do not know what to do. We do not know how to take this land, and here is something that’s really important for us to notice about the report.

It is that the spies, when they came back, did not say a single lie in this report about what they had seen. The cities were fortified. In fact, historians and archaeologists have gone back to some of these cities, and they have found they had big walls. They were strong, fortified cities. There were giants. There were many enemies, and after all, they are just a slave people that is barely a year and a half out of slavery. They didn’t lie. They gave an accurate account of what they had seen. The problem here is not the facts. It is that one word that I called your attention to. It is the three-letter word right in the middle of verse 28, and it is this point where it says, yes, it flows with milk and honey. The fruit is amazing. It is a land of

beauty and plenty, but the people there are powerful, and there are giants, that one little word, and it doesn't matter if it is in Hebrew or English or any other language, you know this to be true. Anyone who utters that word, it is not just a connector, it is an eraser, and that whatever comes after that word, "but," erases whatever comes before it, and so you know that, "I love you, but," you do not feel the warm fuzzies after that, right? "I'm sorry, but," that just erased the whole apology. "The surgery went well, but." It is that foreboding word that just undoes whatever comes before it, and what you need to understand is that these men, these ten spies who came back and gave this report, "but the giants. The grapes are huge, but the giants are even huger," and according to my two-year-old son, that is a word, so don't come at me, okay? The entire nation, people standing on the precipice of everything God has promised them, but, and that is what the people hear, and so the whole camp goes into an uproar. Everybody starts freaking out. Everybody starts losing their mind. "What are we going to do? How will we conquer them?" and remember, these are the people who have seen God show up in power before. These are the people who have seen God separate the seas so they could walk through with dry feet and kids on their shoulders and not a fear in the world. "What are we going to do? There are giants." What are giants to a God who can part the sea?

That is exactly where Caleb goes. He hears the people, and this is what we are told in verse 30: "Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses." There is a commotion. There are people fighting. This is panic feeding panic, and Caleb steps into the middle of it, and he silences them, and he says this, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we certainly can do it." Now there is actually a double emphasis. He uses double verbs to say, "This is a certainty. We absolutely can do this. You should not be afraid." He is speaking to their terrified hearts, and he is saying, "Do not pause. Do not stop. Do not fall back. We need to press forward, because we can do this." Now pause. Ten other spies came back. They saw the same things that Caleb saw. They saw the same cities, the same roads, the same forty days were spent in the land, and he has a very different perspective about what is happening. The question is, why? What did Caleb see that the other spies missed, that the other ten didn't see?

I want you to hold on to that question. Verses 31 and 33, "but the men who had gone up with him said, 'We can't attack these people. They are stronger than we are,' and they spread among the Israelites a bad report." In actual Hebrew, it is an evil report. It is pushing back against the character of God, an evil report about the land that they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All of the people we saw there are of great size," and then they begin to exaggerate a little bit. "We saw the Nephilim." The descendants of the Anak come from the Nephilim. If you go all the way back to Genesis 6, which is pre-flood, there was this group of people that are a little mysterious called the Nephilim. They were a giant race of people who were evil and who were violent, and they say, no, those people are there, but those people existed pre-flood, and what these people believed was that everybody was wiped out at the flood. So how could they have been there? "We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

Do you see how fear escalates? There are giants, there are fortified cities, and now there are these imaginary people that have been gone for centuries that have come back to fight us. These men are terrified, and they also came back holding the grapes and the fruit of the land, but now this land devours people. It is not flowing with milk and honey. It devours them. In three verses, an assessment and a spy

report turn into a ghost story, but then is reported as intelligence, and fear always exaggerates. Fear has never made anything smaller, but then it is the last line that you really need to see, and I want you to look at it again. “We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.” “We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes.” Notice the order. Before any giant said a word, before any giant swung a sword, in their own eyes, they did not believe they could take the land. They did not believe that they were strong enough to do that, “and then we looked the same to them,” and do you think these spies walked up and knocked on the door of the giants and said, “Excuse me, Mr. Giant, sir, like on a scale of one to grasshopper, how big do you think we are?” Like, no, they are spies. They are making an assumption here about what those people must have seemed like to them. They have allowed fear to completely rewrite their reality. “We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes.”

They are terrified, and when the sun goes down, in the very next chapter, it begins with this incredibly tragic moment where all of the people, there is just a great wailing and crying that is heard throughout the camp, and the people do not know what to do, and they start grumbling against God, and they start saying, “Man, why did we come out here?” They start to have this regret. They think they have leapt into the air and that they have reached that moment that there is no going back. Like it would have been better for us to have died in Egypt as slaves than to come out here and to be put to death by the sword of these giants, and then they start attacking God’s character. It is not just that they are afraid. They say God is like some sort of like executioner who has brought them to this place just so they can die. He rescued us just so he could bring us from the wilderness to this place so that we would die. He is some sort of like sadistic person or sadistic God that just wants to annihilate them for some reason, and so they rewrite this God’s character who delivered them, who has said to them that He will give them the land, who has said to them that He will be their God, that He is taking them home, and they rewrite his character in their fear to say, “God is not with us. He is not even for us, so how could we ever take this land?”

So, the night, it keeps unraveling, and the accusation keeps coming, and then it comes to this place where Caleb and Joshua have heard enough. The two spies who went into the land, who have heard what God has said, they have heard enough of these people, and they declare this. “If the Lord is pleased with us,” verses 8 and 9, “If the Lord is pleased with us, He will lead us into the land, a land flowing with milk and honey and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the Lord.” Do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. The land will not devour us. We will devour the land. Their protection is God, and then the three-letter word, “but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them.” Look right in the middle of that verse. “Their protection is gone. They do not stand a chance, but the Lord is with us.” The giants are real. They are an absolute thing that we have to deal with, but the Lord is with us. Caleb and Joshua, they have a “but,” too, and yes, I hear that, now that I say that out loud. The ten said, “Milk and honey, but giants.” Caleb and Joshua said, “Yes, giants, but the Lord.” They are looking at all of the same facts, but they have two drastically different statements, and this is their response to the sermon that Joshua and Caleb just preached: “The Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them.” This is the response of the people. Verse 10, “but the whole assembly talked about stoning them. That is their answer to the only people who are willing to tell them the truth. “We should just get rid of them. We should pick a new leader, and we should go back to Egypt after we are done with them.” That is their solution.

It is actually mid-verse when it says, “but the whole assembly talked about stoning them,” that the glory of God lights up the tabernacle like a beacon. God had been listening to them the whole time. He had been listening to the conversation, and He had been listening to the accusation, and He lights it up to get everyone’s attention, and He declares from the tabernacle to Moses, get out of my way. Do not stand between me and these people. I am going to start over, and I am going to eliminate them, and then Moses, I will make you and those who are faithful into a great nation. I am done with these grumbling people, so Moses, move out of the way, and let me deal with them,” and you have to imagine Moses, who has been leading these people for a little over two years, who have been grumbling the entire time, who have complained about his leadership, who have not liked the things that he has done, who at every moment that things do not go perfectly right, they want to go back to slavery. You have to imagine, I mean, every leader of people in the room would think at that moment, “I will at least spend some time praying about it,” right? Like, “I will just take a moment to sit on this.” Like, yeah, we could start over. We could get rid of all the problem people, and then something better could happen.

This is what Moses says. He knows he can’t make an argument based on the people’s character or based on their faithfulness, so he makes one on God’s character, and he says this in verses 17 and 19: “Now may the Lord’s strength be displayed, just as you have declared.” Now this is really important. Moses is quoting back to God what God has told him is true about Himself. “God, you told me, you declared that you are slow to anger and abounding in love, and that you are forgiving of sin and rebellion, and you told me that you do not leave the guilty unpunished, that you punish the children for the sin of the parents to the third and the fourth generation. Then in accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now.” God, this is the pattern. It has been happening over and over and over again. These people keep making the decisions. They keep having the moments of regret. They keep doing the thing to rebel against you, to not trust you, to not listen to you. You have been forgiving them. Far be it from you to change your character now. Be who you say that you are. Be the God of love and forgiveness. God, be who you have declared you are to us. That is the whole prayer, and then God replied, “I have forgiven them as you asked. Nevertheless.”

Now there is beauty and there is tragedy in this one sentence, because essentially what God is saying here, and you need to hear this, is because there are some times in our lives when we have moments of regret, and we feel like we could never be forgiven. God absolutely forgives the people, forgives the people for the moment that they wish they could take back. Forgiveness is never out of reach. No matter what choice you have made, no matter how far you have gone, no matter the things that you wish you could undo or unsay, forgiveness and grace are always available. “I have forgiven them,” but I want you to see the tragedy in this story too. “Nevertheless.”

God says that they are forgiven, but He also says that there will be consequences to the choices they make. The people said, “If only we had died in the wilderness.” That was their response to being brought to this place. “If only we had just perished in the wilderness,” and God says, nevertheless, I will do to you the very thing I heard you ask for, the very thing I heard you ask for: “If only we had died in the wilderness.” Their regret became their sentence, and so for forty years, until that whole generation is buried in the sand, every person who is twenty years old or older perished in the wilderness, and they were not allowed to enter the Promised Land, except for two men, Caleb and Joshua. There is a beauty and a

tragedy in this story, that moment that you wish you could take back, and the people, they wish they could take this back.

What we are told is the next morning, after all of this has happened, and Moses declares to them, “You will not enter the land because of what you have done,” they say, “Oh no, oh no, now, okay, today, now let’s go take it. Now we can go do it. Let’s go fight the giants.” They do, and Moses says, “Do not do that. God is no longer with you. He has declared your sentence. It is too late,” and they go up over the hill, and they fight the giants, and they are shattered, and they are sent back into the wilderness for forty years. God absolutely forgives your worst moment, but one of the things we struggle with sometimes is that forgiveness for your worst moment does not always mean you will not still feel the consequences. God’s grace is big enough that He can forgive you for anything, but it does not mean that choices do not matter and that what we choose does not have consequences.

What we see in this story, I want you to go back to that moment of regret that we started with, the regret of that moment where you wish you could un-jump. The reason I told you about the car and the snow jump and the trampoline is because some decisions do not offer us do-overs, and we can mourn them bitterly, and we can mean it with our whole heart, and we can even charge the hill screaming, “We were wrong, we want to try again,” but there are sometimes God closes the door on the things that have happened in our lives. Some of us are struggling with that reality. The thing that we said that we wish we could take back, the thing that we wish we had not said or that we had said, the choice that we made, and sometimes we think because the consequences are still being felt that we have not been forgiven, but we are confusing forgiveness and God’s grace with the reality of the things that we have done, and they are not mutually exclusive, and so I want you to hear today, sometimes the consequences, they are real, but they do not mean that you have not been forgiven.

I actually started this story a little bit too late. There is something that happens at the beginning, the very first verses of this story where this is what the Lord says to Moses. Chapter 13, verses 1 and 2: “The Lord said to Moses, ‘Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. For each ancestral tribe, send one of its leaders.’” Notice the present tense there, “I am giving the land to the Israelites.” He is not sending the spies in to see whether or not they can take the land or whether or not they are strong enough to conquer their enemies. He’s saying, “I’m sending them in because I have already given it to you. It is yours. You can have the promise I have given you.” The spies missed the assignment. They were supposed to come back with a good report encouraging the people about what God was going to do for them, to give them strength for the journey that He was about to lead them into, and all they saw were not the challenges that God could defeat, but the challenges that felt too great for their own eyes. What happened in this story, and I think it is such a common reoccurrence, especially in places of our lives where we regret, is what happened to the Israelites at this moment.

This is the big idea for this story. It is that the Israelites forfeited the Promised Land. Do we have that slide, Helmut? They forfeited the promised land because they trusted what they saw over what God had said to them. God said, “I will give you the land,” and they forgot what God had said, and they only focused on what their eyes saw, and so that night, in a single night, standing at the border, ironically, they were too afraid to jump when God had told them to do so. They listened to their hearts, and they listened to their fear, and they did not step out in faith, and only two men were willing to stand in faith alone, and

here is the idea that I want to leave with you. If you forget every part of the story, if you forget every detail, if you forget everything else that I have said this morning, I want you to keep this.

Your “but” determines your direction, and yes, I absolutely heard that again, and this time it was intentional, and I want us to giggle, and I want us to laugh, and I want you to capture this thought, that the “but” that you have determines your direction. Every one of us in life, we talk about our life, and we talk about our life in sentences with a “but” in the middle, and whatever you put after that “but” is the thing that you have decided to build your life on. That is the thing that is sitting in the driver’s seat of your decisions. “God is faithful, but the giants are too big.” You are going to listen to the latter and not the first. “The giants are big, but God is faithful.” That walks you out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land, and so I want you to go back to where we started, that question I told you to keep in front of you. If you could take back one moment of your life, do you know which one you would choose? Can I tell you something that I know about that moment without a single one of you telling me what it is? It is that not one of those moments, without hearing a single detail, I can tell you that not one of those moments that you regret in your life was a moment when you obeyed God, not a single one. The moments we regret are the moments when we choose not to do what God has told us to do, when we say what God has told us not to say, when we have refused to step out in faith when God has called us to step out in faith. Not one of you was thinking of a time that you did what God had told you to do, not one of us.

I have been a pastor long enough to sit with people in the absolute worst moments of their lives, and I have heard regret of every kind. I have heard regret of people’s marriages falling apart, of decisions that they made, of transactions that they have engaged in, of ways that they’ve compromised their integrity. Not a single time have I ever heard, not once have I ever heard people say, “Oh, I really regret that I was faithful to my wife.” “I really regret that I handled my money with integrity.” “I really regret that I trusted God with my career.” Never once have I heard someone wish that I had not followed God when He called me into the unknown. What so many of us do is we live in a place where we make decisions, we take the leap, we go to the place that we know we are not supposed to, and it is after the fact we realize it, and we think, “I should not have done this,” and there is absolutely grace for those moments. That is what we see in the story. God forgives them. “I have forgiven them.” If you bring it to God, He forgives it. Every single time, fully, completely. That is not the fine print in the story. That is the headline, and there is a moment in the story when God is saying He wants to do away with the people because of the rebellion, and Moses stands between God and the people, and he says, “God, do not do this. Be who you say you will. Show us your love. Show us your grace. Show us your forgiveness, and allow the people to continue.”

We have someone who is better than a Moses standing between us and God, who is willing to take the fire of God on our behalf for every wrong thing that we have ever done. Every mistake, every missed opportunity, He took the fire, and in Christ your worst moment does not get your last word. Nevertheless, those moments still have consequences, and so the challenge for us as we move forward is when God calls us to something, how do we choose to jump when He says to jump and to not live with the regret of not doing the things that He has called us to? So many times, we see the report, we see what our eyes see, and it is accurate. The giants are real, the problems are real, they feel too big for us, but the invitation of our God is to step into those spaces and believe what Caleb and Joshua believed, that God is with us, and I can promise you this, you will never regret trusting God. It does not mean that it will always be easy. It

does not mean that it won't hurt. It does not mean that there will not be challenges. It does not mean that it will not be difficult, but you will never look back on that moment and wish you could take it back and wish that you could undo it, and so this week, when you catch yourself mid-sentence, and you say, "I know what God said, but," stop, and right there, know that mid-air is coming, and this time you can choose to capture that thought before you jump, not half a second too late. You can flip the sentence, put the giants first, give God the last word, and I promise you, you will not regret it. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, God, I think there are some people here today who are being called by you to step into some spaces that feel a lot like entering into a space that they know they are not strong enough. They know they are not powerful enough. They know they do not have the capability, and God, I pray that we would trust your word over what we see, that we would trust your character over our own. Father, it is in Christ alone that we can receive the forgiveness that our hearts are longing for from the worst moments of our life that we wish we could take back. While grace does not give do-overs, it gives redemption and mercy, and it brings beauty out of the tragedy. God, would we believe that you are a God big enough to conquer those giants in our lives, the worst moments of regret we have that are never too far gone for grace? May we respond to you now with love, gratitude, and joy, and it is in Christ's name we pray, amen.

Would you please stand to worship with us? Now, if you would, I would like to close our time together with a benediction. If you feel comfortable, you can extend your hands in the open posture of receiving. Lord God, for every heart in this room right now, for every soul that is here, I pray that your love and your grace and your forgiveness would pierce our hearts. For those moments we wish we could take back, those moments we wish we could rewind, that we could undo, God, your grace is sufficient for every single one of them. God, for the places that you have called us into following you, may we trust what you have said over what our eyes see. It is in Christ's name that we pray, amen. You may go in peace.

43:06 minutes

Edited by Tom Kenaston

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