

Joshua and Caleb: Men God Could Count On

Message 05 of the series, "Numbers: Counting on God"

I. Joshua and Caleb were men of convictions.

"So the Israelites divided the land, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. Now the men 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 brothers who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt with fear." Joshua 14:5-8a (NIV)

Life Application: We must stand for our convictions even if it means standing against the majority.

"This was (the spies') report to Moses: 'We entered the land you sent us to explore, and it is indeed a bountiful country—a land flowing with milk and honey...But the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak!' ...But Caleb tried to quiet the people as they stood before Moses. 'Let's go at once to take the land,' he said. 'We can certainly conquer it!' But the other men who had explored the land with him disagreed. 'We can't go up against them! They are stronger than we are!' ... (Joshua and Caleb) said to all the people of Israel, 'The land we traveled through and explored is a wonderful land! And if the LORD is pleased with us, he will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey. Do not rebel against the LORD, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the LORD is with us! Don't be afraid of them!' But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb." Numbers 13:27-31, 14:4-10 (NLT)

Note: Majority opinion is NOT a reliable measure of right and wrong. "You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it." Matthew 7:13-14 (NLT)

Note: We have no idea what blessings we will miss out on when we compromise our convictions. "Of all those I rescued from Egypt, no one who is twenty years old or older will ever see the land I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for they have not obeyed me wholeheartedly. The only exceptions are Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they have wholeheartedly followed the LORD." Numbers 32:11-12 (NLT)

Challenge to men: We must make up our minds to be men of purity.

"I will set before my eyes no vile thing." Psalm 101:3 (NIV)

II. Joshua and Caleb were men who wholeheartedly followed the Lord.

"For my part, I wholeheartedly followed the LORD my God. So that day Moses solemnly promised me, 'The land of Canaan on which you were just walking will be your grant of land and that of your descendants forever, because you wholeheartedly followed the LORD my God.' Now, as you can see, the LORD has kept me alive and well as he promised for all these forty-five years since Moses made this promise—even while Israel wandered in the wilderness." Joshua 14:8b-10a (NIV)

Life Application: God is looking for men who love Him wholeheartedly.

"But my servant Caleb has a different attitude than the others have. He has remained loyal to me, so I will bring him into the land he explored. His descendants will possess their full share of that land."

Numbers 14:24 (NLT)

"The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him." 2 Chronicles 16:9 (NLT)

Note: Talk is cheap. "Jesus replied, 'You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'" Mark 7:6 (NLT)

Challenge to men: We must make up our minds to be spiritual leaders in our homes.

"But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:15 (NLT)

III. Joshua and Caleb were men who remained faithful to God throughout their lives.

"Today I am eighty-five years old. I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then. So give me the hill country that the LORD promised me. You will remember that as scouts we found the descendants of Anak living there in great, walled towns. But if the LORD is with me, I will drive them out of the land, just as the LORD said." So Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave Hebron to him as his portion of land. Hebron still belongs to the descendants of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite because he wholeheartedly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. (Previously Hebron had been called Kiriath-arba. It had been named after Arba, a great hero of the descendants of Anak.) And the land had rest from war." Joshua 14:10b-15 (NLT)

Note: Caleb placed his faith in God NOT his circumstances OR his own strength. "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God." Psalm 20:7 (NIV)

Note: God isn't looking for amazing people he can make faithful. He is looking for faithful people through whom He can do amazing things. "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13 (NIV)

Challenge to men: We must make up our minds to be faithful men of integrity every day.

"Who may worship in your sanctuary, LORD? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts. Those who refuse to gossip or harm their neighbors or speak evil of their friends. Those who despise flagrant sinners, and honor the faithful followers of the LORD, and keep their promises even when it hurts. Those who lend money without charging interest, and who cannot be bribed to lie about the innocent. Such people will stand firm forever." Psalm 15:1-5 (NLT)

John Schmidt • 06-17-18 • john@centeringlives.com

Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. When you think of a great leader, who comes to mind? Why do you consider them great?
2. Read Joshua 14:6-12 and 24:14-15. Joshua was a consistent leader throughout his life. Why do you think Joshua was so faithful in his leadership?
3. Joshua is known as a great leader, for when a strong leader was needed, he stood strong and led in the right direction. Why do you think Joshua was ready to lead in those tough circumstances? How does this parallel with the faithfulness of Peter and John in Acts 4:13?
4. The greatest role model of leadership is Jesus. In John 13:1-5, Jesus did a selfless act while facing impending death. How did verse 3 impact how he responded?
5. Read Ephesians 4:11-16. Becoming a good strong leader takes time to develop/mature. What are some areas in your life that God is working on right now to help you mature in Christ?
6. Read Mark 10:42-45. How does the leadership Jesus described differ from what we know today? Is your leadership style that of a servant leader?
7. What do you think it would look like if all believers began to live out Ephesians 5:1-2? How would the local body of believers be impacted by a bunch of believers imitating God in all they do?

Quotations to Consider:

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so

that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat." Teddy Roosevelt

"Preference is oriented toward convenience. Conviction is oriented toward sacrifice. The challenge is being willing to acknowledge that what you lose by sacrificing is far less than what you lose by compromise." Andy Stanley

"I would rather be a man of conviction than a man of conformity." Martin Luther King, Jr.

"I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had no where else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day." Abraham Lincoln

"If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything." Peter Marshall