

Give Me this Mountain

Joshua 14: 6-14

Today we celebrate Father's Day, a day set aside nationally to honor our earthly fathers. I appreciate the godly men of our church and the influence they show among our congregation. Clearly there is a biblical mandate for men, husbands and fathers to take the lead within the home, especially in regard to spiritual matters. I am thankful for the women who have a positive influence as well, and I fear in many instances, they have been forced to take the lead due to the lack of presence or desire among men.

As we celebrate Father's Day, I pray the fathers, and men in general, will embrace the responsibilities and lead their homes in a way that is pleasing to the Lord. Statistics repeatedly reveal the negative impact on children, and society as a whole, brought about by the absence or lack of involvement of men and fathers. Take a moment to consider findings of a twenty year study released by *The Barna Group* on August 1, 2011:

- Church attendance declined by six percentage points among men, The research showed that the proportion of men who had attended a church service, other than a special event such as a wedding or funeral, during the week prior to their survey interview fell from 42% to 36%.
- Sunday school attendance declined by eight percentage points among men since 1991. Only one out of eight men (13%) presently attends such a meeting in a typical week.
- The percentage of men who volunteer at a church during a typical week has slipped by six percentage points since 1991 to its present level of 18%.
- The proportion of unchurched men has grown by nine percentage points since 1991. Today an estimated 39% of all men can be deemed unchurched – that is, having not attended a church event, other than a special service such as a wedding or funeral, in the past six months.ⁱ

Our text today deals with Caleb, one of the original 12 spies that surveyed the Promised Land, prior to the Wilderness Wanderings. In a timely survey, Caleb would not have been included among those whose commitment to the Lord had diminished. His life was lived for the Lord and his desire to serve Him never wavered. We have picked up in the latter years of Caleb's life, after the Israelites have entered Canaan. His commitment and desire present a challenge for all men today. I want to look in on this victorious moment in Caleb's life and the [values](#) he possessed as we consider the thought: [Give Me this Mountain](#).

I. The Reputation of Caleb (6-9) – Caleb had a reputation among the people of Israel. Our modern society needs those who possess such a reputation. What can we learn about Caleb? We find that he was:

A. A Man of Character (6) – *Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea.* We are familiar with the account of the spies. Of the 12, only Joshua and Caleb believed they could inhabit the land as God had promised. They alone desired to possess the land prior to the years of wandering. God knew Caleb's heart, and the people did as well. *Num.14:24 – But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.* Caleb was recognized for his character, his commitment to the Lord and the faith he had.

- Would you not agree that we need men of character in our day, men who have a reputation for commitment to the Lord and faith in Him? Those who know us ought to know where we stand. There should be no question concerning our faithfulness to Christ or our desire to follow Him!

B. A Man of Commitment (7a) – *Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadeshbarnea to espy out the land.* Caleb was forty years old when he first visited Canaan. He is now 85 and he is still committed unto the Lord. He endured the years of wandering, knowing God was faithful, and that he would possess the land of promise. It would have been easy to have given up after all those years of difficulty, but Caleb remained committed.

- Men what a challenge that presents to us today. We desperately need those who will remain committed to the Lord in these difficult days. We need those who will not be defeated by the burdens of life or the discouragement of others. We must keep our eyes on the prize and remain faithful to the Lord and the responsibilities we have been given!

C. A Man of Courage (7b-8a) – *...I brought him word again as it was in mine heart.* ^[8] *Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt:* He and Joshua were the only two of the twelve with enough faith and courage to follow the Lord. The other ten were fearful and created fear in the hearts of the multitude. Although he was greatly outnumbered, Caleb retained his courage and would not back down.

- There is much we face today that creates fear in the hearts of many. It is easy to look at circumstances and lose our courage. Life is not easy; we will face battles along the way, but we must continue in the fight. We need courage to stand for truth in our day, even if we stand alone!

D. A Man of Conviction (8b) – *but I wholly followed the LORD my God.* It would have been easy for Caleb to have given in to the pressure. The people of Israel were determined to avoid the struggles necessary to inhabit Canaan. The people who possessed the land were mighty and many. Caleb, however, was a man of conviction. He had placed his faith and trust in the Lord. He knew that God was stronger than any adversary they would face. He knew God had promised the land as their inheritance and Caleb wholly followed the Lord.

- This too is an area where many men are weak today. Few are willing to go against the grain. Most will compromise rather than standing for the Lord. It is easy to get our eyes off of Jesus and on the struggles we face. Daily we face temptation to compromise in an effort to avoid controversy. We must realize that we are more than conquerors in Christ. He defeated sin and Satan on the cross. He has promised a home in heaven. What have we to fear? Our day needs men of conviction who will stand upon the Word of God without fail and continue to serve the Lord, even if the majority it opposed.

E. A Man of Confidence (9) – *And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.* Caleb never doubted the promises of God. Moses had confirmed to him that he would one day inherit the land that he had examined. There had been days of difficulty, but Caleb's faith remained strong. He was confident in the Word of God.

- Men there will be difficult times as we journey through life. There will be times when our faith is tested and we will likely wonder if we will ever make it. We must remain confident in our Lord. We must not depend upon our wisdom or ability and we must not forsake the faith! If God's Word says it, that settles it. Man will let you down, and circumstances in life will bring disappointment, but we can remain confident in Jesus. He declared, *It is Finished*, and He meant what He said!

I. The Reputation of Caleb (6-9)

II. The Request of Caleb (10-12) – As Joshua divided up the land among the tribes of Israel, Caleb made his request for his inheritance. Let's consider his request. Notice:

A. His Determination (10-11) – *And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in*

the wilderness: and now, lo, I *am* this day fourscore and five years old. ^[11] As yet I *am as* strong this day as I *was* in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength *was* then, even so *is* my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. At this point in his life, Caleb was 85 years old, and yet he revealed his intention to possess the portion promised to him. He had endured much adversity, and even though he was growing old, he was determined to inherit the land. God had been faithful, bringing him this far, and Caleb wasn't about to abandon the effort this close to the finish.

- We too need that determination on our day. We need those who are committed to finishing the race. We need those who realize they need God each day and through Him nothing is impossible. There is no place to give up or quit. Our bodies may weaken as we age, and we may be unable to accomplish many of the things we once did, but we must remain faithful until the Lord calls us home. Far too many have abandoned the effort just short of victory!

B. His Desire (12a) – Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced. Many years before, Caleb had surveyed the land and envisioned possessing a particular mountain. His commitment to the Lord had brought the promise of inheriting that parcel of land. Caleb never lost his desire for his inheritance. Each day he lived, he longed to receive that which had been promised. He would be satisfied with nothing less.

- Men, often we settle for less than what God has for us. We continually live below our means spiritually. God has a mountain of victory for us to enjoy, but often we settle for the valley of defeat or compromise. I pray our desire will be as Caleb's was. May we not be satisfied with anything less than the very best God has to offer. May we seek Him, walking with Him daily, in such a way as to receive that which He has promised. What do you desire of life? I want to possess the mountain of God's goodness and presence. I want to inhabit the place He desires for me, the place He has prepared for me in this life.

C. His Dependence (12b) – if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said. Forty five years earlier Caleb was prepared to possess the land by faith. He knew then they were unable in themselves to conquer Canaan, but he believed God was able. As he stood on the brink of his inheritance, his faith had not changed. Caleb knew the task ahead would not be easy. He knew the struggle would be hard, but he was not depending upon his ability. He knew God was able to provide, and if he was to possess his inheritance, God would have to be with him as he faced the inhabitants of the land.

- What wisdom we find in the life of Caleb. We too need the help of God every day. It seems as we age, we are tempted to depend more upon our abilities through the wisdom we have gained and the experience we possess. We face a difficult task ahead. We are opposed on every hand.

We will never overcome in and of ourselves. If we are to be successful and inhabit our spiritual Canaan, having the opportunity to pass something on to future generations, we must have the help and guidance of the Lord. We need Him as much today as we ever have!

I. The Reputation of Caleb (6-9)

II. The Request of Caleb (10-12)

III. The Reward of Caleb (13-14) – And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. ^[14] Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. Victory and reward did not come quickly for Caleb. He had to serve the Lord faithfully for many years before he obtained his blessing, but in the end it was worth the effort. He was faithful and committed unto the Lord and God honored his faithfulness. Caleb was rewarded because he wholly followed God.

- As I studied this passage I realized that Caleb received what all the others could have if they had only possessed the commitment and faith he had. His walk with the Lord and obedience to Him made the difference. Many today do not enjoy the abundance of God because they failed to follow the Lord. If we are to receive His abundance, we must walk with Him.
- Our reward may not be immediate, but if we will persevere, God will reward us. If you are a child of God, this life may bring little in the way of abundance, but I can assure you, the inheritance that waits will be worth all the effort!

Conclusion: This message was prepared with men and fathers in mind, but there is application for each of us. Do our lives resemble the life of Caleb? Do we possess the commitment and desire he had? What do others see as they observe the life we live? When our time on earth is through, will we leave anything of value behind? If there is a need in your life, I urge you to seek the Lord.

Caleb enjoyed the inheritance he received because of his relationship with God. We are all on a journey, headed somewhere. This life will soon be over and we will inherit our eternal reward. Only the saved will make it to heaven. He is the only way to possess eternal life. Apart from Jesus there is only condemnation, separation, and suffering in hell. Do you know Christ as your Lord and Savior? Have you made preparation to enter heaven when this life is through? If not please come to Jesus as He leads.

ⁱ <http://www.barna.org/faith-spirituality/508-20-years-of-surveys-show-key-differences-in-the-faith-of-americas-men-and-women?q=gender+differences>