

Joshua 14:6-15
Title: Fight to Win
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Discussion Questions:

1. What would you consider a win in your life? Would God consider that a win also?
 2. Without using names, do you know anyone that has gotten off course in their race? How or why did it happen?
 3. What is harder for you? Claiming God's promises or waiting for His timing? What could help us in either situation?
 4. How can we stay spiritually strong like Caleb?
 5. How can you decide what is significant and what is not? Has anyone taken significant actions and made a difference in your life?
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Teaching Notes:

We have come to the division of the land in Joshua.

Two and half tribes on the east side of the Jordan.

9 and half tribes on the west side of the Jordan.

Tribes will receive their land...But so also will 2 people.

Joshua and Caleb get their own portion.

But before we get into Joshua, let's look at something Paul wrote.

I Cor 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Paul says, if you want to win, if you want to obtain the prize...

...You must be self-controlled and intentional.

The question is, what is your win? What race are you running?

In certain races, a top ten in my age group is my win.

Sometimes, I wanted to know I gave my best.

In other races, I just wanted to finish.

God has given each of us races and there are wins attached.

Godly, healthy relationships in your life?
Knowing that your kids are following Christ?
Serving Him in a specific way?
Being a light in a certain place?

“Why can’t I just go with the flow?”
...Because not everyone wins.

Everyone starts the race...
...but not everyone finishes and only one wins.

After Paul shares the race/fight analogy he points to Israel.

10:1-12 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them...Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

When we talk about winning the race...

...the win for Israel was to possess what God promised.
...And only two people that started, won that race.

Everyone had the same chances.

But not everyone made the same choices.

Big idea: Winning comes from intentional choices.

...Title: Fight to Win.

Joshua and Caleb were the only two who won & finished the race.

Today in Joshua 14, we focus on Caleb.

Caleb was a leader in Judah but actually was a Kenezite.
He was one of the 12 spies to go into the Promised Land.

All 12 spies returned with a good report of the land...
...But 10 had a bad report of their chances.

They knew the land was good...

...they just didn't trust that God was.

They said, yes the land flows with milk and honey.
But...The people are powerful, the cities are large and fortified.
And there are giants that made us feel like grasshoppers.

**The 10 spies saw the obstacles not the opportunities...
...But Caleb and Joshua saw the obstacles as opportunities.**

“The majority measured the giants against their own strength; Caleb and Joshua measured the giants against God. The majority trembled; the two triumphed. The majority had great giants but a little God. Caleb had a great God and little giants.” Alan Redpath

This is how we can be too.

Like the 10 spies...
...we make decisions based on fears or feelings instead of faith.

But that is not how Caleb lived.

And that is why he finished his race and received the prize.

14:6 Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him: “You know the word which the Lord said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea.

Notice the first thing Caleb reminds Joshua of is God's word.

To enter the Promise Land we must believe God's promises...
...but let's go a little deeper.

If we are going to win we need to...

1. Know and claim God's promises.

What if Caleb didn't **know** what God said?

What if he forgot?

Or what if he just didn't come to claim it?

What if he thought, that was too long ago?

What do I mean by claiming God's promises?

This is not “name it and claim it” theology.

This is not pick something *you want* and claim it by faith.

Caleb goes to Joshua and recounts God's promise to him.

We also can go to Jesus and recount God's promise to us.

...I am not going to worry, I am asking that you would provide.
...I don't feel close to you, but I know I am adopted as your child
...I'm afraid I'm the same old me, but I know I am a new creation.

Recounting His promises and our possessions...
...demonstrates & strengthens our faith.

Caleb goes on...

7 I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as *it was* in my heart.

God promised Caleb he would inherit the land when he was 40...
... and 45 years later here he is.

If you want to win the race, you must...

2. Wait on the Lord.

God's promises are for us, but the timetable belongs to Him.

He does make promises, but He also controls the timing.

Sometimes there is a bigger picture.
Sometimes there are other pieces to fall into place.

Elijah waited on the Lord for the rain.
David waited on the Lord for the throne.
Jesus waited on the Father for His timing.

Caleb waited 45 years, and now he is first in line!

8 Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God. **9** So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.'

This was the promise for the people to possess the land...
...but it could also be for a person.

The rest of the people didn't enjoy the land...
...but Caleb **did** because Caleb wholly followed the Lord.

That's not just what Caleb said, it is what God said about Caleb.

3. Wholly follow the Lord.

It is not just about obtaining a prize...it is about following the Lord.

**I want to win because that is where God is leading.
I want the prize because it comes from the Lord.**

When we just focus on the win or the reward or the prize.

...We lose perspective on what is really important.
...We can be tempted to compromise just to get what we want.
...We forget the importance of relationship.

That is why I think it is unhealthy to just focus on heaven.

Salvation is not about heaven.
Heaven is not just a place to escape our responsibilities.
Heaven is a place to enjoy our relationship w/God and others.

Caleb lived out the words of Moses and later Jesus...

Love the Lord your God with all of your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. Matt 22:37 and Deut. 6:5

Caleb wholly followed the Lord...

Don't let anything divide your heart, even God's blessings.

10 And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the Lord spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old. **11** As yet I *am as* strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength *was* then, so now *is* my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in.

The Lord kept him alive or sustained him...for 45 years.
...And he stayed strong for 45 years.

If you want to stay in the fight to have a chance to win...

4. Stay alive and stay strong.

This is the classic tension of Scripture.

Is it God's sovereignty or man's responsibility that kept him? Yes.

God was looking out for Caleb.

And Caleb was looking after the Lord.

Every other person besides Joshua died in front of his eyes...
...because of unbelief and outright sin.

- **Caleb chose to be holy, to be set apart for the Lord.**

- He didn't join their unbelief or sin.
- He didn't commit idolatry or sexual immorality.
- He didn't tempt the Lord or complain against God.

Sin will put you in a place of judgment or discipline...

...And sin will sap your spiritual strength.

Caleb didn't just trust God's promises...

...he trusted God...so he trusted God's commands.

Caleb's faith led to obedience which led to life and strength.

12 Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the Lord spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fortified. It may be that the Lord *will be* with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said."

For Caleb, if God's word is true, then nothing else matters.

Mountain? Giants? Fortified cities?

If you want to fight to win, you are going to have to get in the ring.

5. Embrace the challenges.

Don't let fear stop you from serving.

Don't let worry stop you from tithing.

Don't let time stop you from joining a group.

13 And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. **14** Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.

I don't know if he chose Hebron just because it was challenging...

...I think he might have chosen it because it was significant.

When we talk about fighting to win...

6. Choose significance.

Don't fight meaningless fights.

Hebron was where Abraham built an altar to the Lord.

Here he also purchased a field w/a cave to bury his wife Sarah.

It is the only place actually owned by Abraham in Canaan.

Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Joseph were buried here.

It was known as the City of the Fathers.

This had been a place of great significance.

It would also become a place of significance in the future.

Hebron would be where David was crowned and their first capital.

Consider significant things people have done in your life...

...Consider significant things you can do for others.

Invest eternally with hope and purpose.

What is a fight worth fighting? What will a win look like?

15 And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (*Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim*). Then the land had rest from war.

It used to be named for the biggest giant, Kirjath “Arba”...

...but now it is Hebron which means friendship or alliance.

7. Make good alliances.

...A key to winning is knowing who is in your corner.