

The Bible 20/20: “Courageous Faith” (2-23-20)

Introduction: Courageous Faith - reading this past week was Numbers 11-30

1) Faces Reality

2) Sees Opportunity

3) Trusts God for Victory

Review: The people of Israel have now spent a little over a year in the wilderness since leaving Egypt . . .

- They have been established as a nation & given laws to govern them.
- God has established the grounds for right relationship with Him.
- God has provided for their many needs
- They have faced many failures (with both consequences & mercy)

***This required & challenged their Faith - could they endure a hard season with patience & trust?**

1) Courageous Faith - Faces Reality

Numbers 13:1-2 (ESV)

(1) The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, (2) "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel. From each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a chief among them."

Note: God sends them to spy out the land. This wasn't done in fear, it was by design.

The next several verses describe the men chosen for the task - 1 from each tribe. Joshua (tribe of Ephraim) & Caleb (tribe of Judah) are among these 12 men

Numbers 13:17-20 (ESV)

(17) Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan and said to them, "Go up into the Negeb and go up into the hill country, (18) and see what the land is, and whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, (19) and whether the land that they dwell in is good or bad, and whether the cities that they dwell in are camps or strongholds, (20) and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. Be of good courage and bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.

Note: Their mission was to assess the situation. Map it out, see the opportunities, & discover the challenges.

- Courageous Faith is not about having blind & ignorant faith.
- We are not called to denial or ignorance in the face of life's challenges.

- In fact the very opposite it true - God tells us to take a good look!

The question is: What will we see?

2) Courageous Faith - Sees Opportunity

One Report . . .

Numbers 13:25-29 (ESV)

(25) At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. (26) And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. They brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. (27) And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. (28) However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. (29) The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan."

Note: The fruit is good, the land is good. The people are strong, the cities are fortified, and here is the layout.

Two Perspectives . . .

Numbers 13:30 (ESV)

But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for **we are well able to overcome it.**"

Numbers 13:31-33 (ESV)

(31) Then the men who had gone up with him said, "**We are not able to go up against the people,** for they are stronger than we are." (32) So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, "The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. (33) And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and **we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.**"

Note: From the same information, there were 2 different perspectives . . .

Caleb and Joshua's Perspective: "We are able to overcome!"

Perspective of the 10 Spies: "We are not able, we seemed like grasshoppers to ourselves & to them"

One perspective is based upon God & His promises, the other is based on a false-view of reality!

These 2 viewpoints were before all the people - which would they choose?

Numbers 14:1-4 (ESV)

(1) Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. (2) And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! (3) Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" (4) And they said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt."

Note: When facing overwhelming challenges - they preferred to either return to Egypt or die in the wilderness!

3) Courageous Faith - Trusts God for Victory**Numbers 14:5-9 (ESV)**

(5) Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the people of Israel. (6) And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes (7) and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. (8) If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. (9) Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them."

Note: Joshua & Caleb call on the people to Trust God for Victory!

Numbers 14:10 (ESV)

Then all the congregation said to stone them with stones. But the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel.

Note: There is something inside us that wants to reject and silence the voice that calls us to fight for victory.

- **We can become so comfortable with out dis-comfort, that we won't risk change.**
- **We can be so affected by past pain, that we will do anything we can to avoid future pain even at the expenses of our own freedom and victory.**

***Numbers 14:11-19** - God and Moses speak about the fate of Israel. Moses appeals to God's Character (not the people's worthiness of forgiveness) in seeking their pardon!

God's Response . . .**Numbers 14:20-23, 25 (ESV)**

(20) Then the LORD said, "I have pardoned, according to your word. (21) But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD, (22) none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, (23) shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it . . . (25) Now, since the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valleys, turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea."

Note: God pardons them, but there are life-long consequences for his people. Notice verse 22 again .

. .

Listen: Your perspective when enduring the wilderness will directly impact your perspective when facing an opportunity for victory!

Numbers 14:24 (ESV)

But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it.

Conclusion: Life takes **Courageous Faith** in order to Face Reality, See Opportunity, Trust God for Victory!