

The Struggle Between

My Faith
And
My Focus

Part II

Last Week.... A Firm Foundation Comes From a Fixed Focus

Principle #1

Whatever Gets Your Attention Gets You

Principle #2

*If You Keep Looking At What They Have;
You'll Start To Question What God Gave You*

Principle #3

When we can't explain what we see, we begin to doubt what we believe.

Principle #4

Don't Allow What Is Temporary To Cause You To Stop Trusting

Key Passage

Numbers 13:25-29 (NLT)

25 After exploring the land for forty days, the men returned 26 to Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran.

They reported to the whole community what they had seen and showed them the fruit they had taken from the land.

27 This was their 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. Here is the kind of fruit it produces.

***28 But** the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak!*

Introduction

Most believers have been told their whole Christian life that **they need more faith**
Pray for more faith. Fast for more faith. Confess more faith.
And while faith is certainly **essential** to the Christian life,
Many believers don't have **a faith problem. THEY HAVE A FOCUS PROBLEM.**

This Is What Happens In Numbers 13

The Twelve Spies Went Into The Promised Land
They Were **So Focused On The Problem** That They Missed **The Promise**

The Promise

Exodus 3:8 (NLT)

8 So I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them out of Egypt **into their own fertile and spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey—the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites now live.**

Exodus 13:5 (NLT)

5 You must celebrate this event in this month each year **after the Lord brings you into the land** of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites. **(He swore to your ancestors that he would give you this land—a land flowing with milk and honey.)**

Exodus 13:11 (NLT)

11 “This is what you must do **when the Lord fulfills the promise he swore to you and to your ancestors.**
When he gives you the land where the Canaanites now live...

Observation Of The Problem Will Cause You To Overlook The Evidence

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28 BUT the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak!

They Held The **Evidence In Their Hands...** But Held **Doubt In Their Hearts**

They had **visible proof** of what **God Said....** **The Fruit and The Foes**

The Giants Eventually Outweighed God’s Goodness

One Writer stated: **Consistent Observation Will Become The Engine Of Your Imagination**

What We **Keep Looking At** Becomes What **We Believe In**

They **Validated The Promise** Just Long Enough To Make Their **Unbelief Sound Reasonable**

THEY AFFIRMED THE PROMISE...BUT THEN ADJUSTED THEIR CONCLUSION.

The Question Is not just, “**Do I Know God Promises;** **BUT** Am I Willing To Take **GOD At His Word**”

Observation Of The Problem Will Cause You To Overlook The Evidence

When Evidence Is Not Enough

They had evidence in their hand... but also had evidence in their mind...

Exodus 14:29-31 (NLT)

29 But the people of Israel had walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, as the water stood up like a wall on both sides.

30 That is how the Lord rescued Israel from the hand of the Egyptians that day. And the Israelites saw the bodies of the Egyptians washed up on the seashore.

31 When the people of Israel saw the mighty power that the Lord had unleashed against the Egyptians, they were filled with awe before him.

THEY PUT THEIR FAITH IN THE LORD AND IN HIS SERVANT MOSES.

*They had put their **FAITH** in the LORD and MOSES*

So they had faith, They Had Seen His Power

*THEY STRUGGLED WITH **FOCUS***

Observation Of The Problem Will Cause You To Overlook The Evidence

Numbers 13:25-29 (NLT)

28 BUT the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified.
We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak!

“The Dangerous BUT”

The But Had An Impact on their Belief
The But Became The Bridge From Faith To Fear

The But Shifted Their Focus

It Mentioned The Promise ~ It Magnified The Problem
What Are You Missing Simply Because You Are Magnifying The Problem

If You Desire A Different Outcome ~ Shift The Promise To The Other Side Of The But

Weeping May Endure For A Night, BUT Joy Is Coming In The Morning
Many Are The Afflictions of the Righteous, BUT The Lord Delivers Out Of Them All

What Comes After Your But, will determine whether you walk in faith or remain stuck in fear

Their Focus Kept Them From Participating In What God Had Planned

Numbers 13:30-31 (NLT)

30 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!”

31 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!”*

*Their “BUT” didn’t cancel the promise
It Canceled their participation in it*

*Your Participation In God’s Promise Is Conditional
Are You Willing To Trust What God Said Over What You See*

*Caleb’s Faith Didn’t Deny Reality ~ There Are Giants, The City Is Fortified, It Is Enemy Territory
BUT OUR GOD IS ABLE TO FULFILL WHAT HE PROMISED
He Refused To Allow Fear To Override His Faith*

*They Heard The Same Promise, Saw The Same Problems, But Had A Different Perspective
Romans 8:31 (NIV)*

31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Their Focus Had An Impact On Their Identity

Numbers 13:32-33 (NLT)

32 So *they spread* this bad report about the land among the Israelites: “The land we traveled through and explored *will devour anyone who goes to live there. All the people we saw were huge.*

33 We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak.

NEXT TO THEM WE FELT LIKE GRASSHOPPERS, and THAT’S WHAT THEY THOUGHT, TOO!”

Their Focus Was Revealed Through Their Language

Proverbs 23:7

7 For as he thinks *within himself*, so he is.

*They Were **Defeated** Before The Report Was Delivered*

Misplaced Focus Leads To...

Inferior Thinking ~ Doubting Who You Are

They Had Developed A Grasshopper Mentality

A diminished self-view that ignores God’s Power, God’s Promise, and God’s Presence

*When David Fought Goliath ~ The Army Saw Him as **TOO BIG TO FIGHT***

*David Saw Him As **TOO BIG TO MISS***

YOUR VICTORY STARTS WITH HOW YOU VIEW YOURSELF THROUGH GOD’S WORD

Their Focus Produced a Pattern That Passed to the Next Generation

Numbers 14:1-4 (NLT)

1 Then the whole community began weeping aloud, and they cried all night.

2 Their voices rose in a great chorus of protest against Moses and Aaron.

“If only we had died in Egypt, or even here in the wilderness!” they complained.

3 “Why is the Lord taking us to this country only to have us die in battle? Our wives and our little ones will be carried off as plunder! Wouldn’t it be better for us to return to Egypt?”

4 Then they plotted among themselves, “Let’s choose a new leader and go back to Egypt!”

*Because They **Refused To Believe**.... An Entire Generation
Missed The Land God Delighted To **Give Them***

This is How A Misplaced Focus Becomes Cultural

***10 Negative Individuals** Poison The Minds Of **The Whole Community**
How Many People In Your Circle Bring Negative Energy*

Like Last Week ~ They Begin To Question God’s Faithfulness

*They Decided Not To **Walk Into Their Future**;
Instead Chose To **Go Back To What Was Familiar***

The Danger of History Repeating Itself

Numbers 32:7-13 (NLT)

7 “Why do you want to **discourage the rest of the people of Israel** from going across to the land **the Lord has given them?**

8 Your ancestors did the same thing when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to explore the land.

9 After they went up to the valley of Eshcol and explored the land, **they discouraged the people of Israel from entering the land, the Lord was giving them.**

10 Then the Lord was very angry with them, and he vowed,

11 ‘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.**

12 The only exceptions are Caleb and Joshua, for they have wholeheartedly followed the Lord.’

13 “The Lord was angry with Israel and **made them wander in the wilderness for forty years** until the entire generation that sinned in the Lord’s sight had died.

*The wilderness wandering wasn't just **PUNISHMENT**
It was the result of **A PATTERN** that never got corrected.*

Conclusion....

Principle #1

Observation Of The Problem Will Cause You To Overlook The Evidence

Principle #2

Their Focus Kept Them From Participating In What God Had Planned

Principle #3

Their Focus Had An Impact On Their Identity

Principle #4

Their Focus Produced a Pattern That Passed to the Next Generation

DON'T ALLOW THIS PATTERN TO BE REPEATED