

## The Sin of Small-Thinking

Now we don't always think of small thinking as a **sin**. Maybe we call it being humble, practical, or just pessimistic.

However, the definition of sin is "missing the mark" - or falling short of God's best for our lives. And I want to suggest that small thinking leads to missing God's best for our lives.

There were 2.4 million Israelites that left Egypt only to die in the wilderness, without ever possessing the Promised land. They missed God's best for their lives, because of their small thinking...

**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!" **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!**" (Numbers 13:30-33)

While this man named Caleb had an *overcomer mindset*. The rest of the Israelites mentioned in this passage, had a *defeatist mindset*.

- I hope some of us will make the shift today from a *defeatist mindset* into the mindset of an *overcomer*.

**How they felt about themselves is what other people thought about them.**

## **What you feel about yourself determines what others will think about you!**

- If you feel that you are **inferior**, don't be surprised if people start seeing and treating you as if you are **inferior**.
- If you feel like a **reject**, don't be surprised if we keep experiencing **rejection**.
- If we feel that we are **loved**, don't be surprised if you keep experiencing more **love**.
- If we feel **blessed**, don't be surprised if people start saying about you, "He's so **blessed**...she's so **blessed**..."

## ***How do you feel about yourself?***

What really stands out to me about what we discover in this passage is that they FELT that they were grasshoppers. It wasn't just what they thought once or twice...it was how they felt.

- **Feelings are the product of habitual thinking.** Some of these Israelites were slaves for 40 years in Egypt, so every single day it was reiterated and reinforced that they were grasshoppers. After thinking they were grasshoppers for days, weeks, months, and years- they couldn't help but to feel they were grasshoppers.
- **Feelings are also something we can feed or starve.** Now many of us here know what it is like to fall in love. Oh the feelings are strong and undeniable.

- However, you who have been married for some amount of time, know that those initial romantic feelings can easily dissipate - if it is not constantly *fed*.
  - A fire can only last as long as we keep feeding it wood. If we stop throwing logs on the fire, it doesn't matter how hot or big the fire once was - it will die.

We need to shift our mindsets and change how we habitually think about ourselves. **Think about yourself the way you would want others to think about you.**

- I remember when I was in college and grad school, I experienced tremendous warfare in my mind. It was almost non-stop, I would be hearing negative things in my head about myself and just nasty thoughts about others. I remember my counter to all those negative thoughts, was "*I am a holy man of God...*" Holy means "set apart for God's purposes". If I could do it again, I would have fought all those negative thoughts with "I am the beloved son of God..." But I was doing the best I could with what I knew at the time.
  - Now, during that time, a casual friend was sharing with me, "I don't know why but whenever I think about you, the thing that always comes to my mind is, '*You are a holy man of God' ...*'"
  - That really stood out to me, because I had never told people that this is something I always told myself. Yet, I realized that what I was **saying** about me - was being **transmitted** to others.
- There are certain feelings you have about yourself that you need to feed and there are certain feelings you have about yourself that you need to starve.

**How we feel about ourselves determines how far we can go in this life.**

If you fast forward in the story, Caleb is able to enter into the Promised land, and the rest of them died in the wilderness.

***What they believed about themselves is what they became.***

Caleb saw himself taking the land and building his house there, raising his family there - and so that's where he ended up. The rest of the Israelites saw themselves as mere nomads, and so they were until the day they died.

***They got exactly what they expected.***

Caleb expected to be in the Promised land. The Israelites expected to not be. Both got exactly what they expected.

***They ended up exactly where they said they would.***

What have we prophesied about ourselves?

*Our words may have more power to manifest that we realize.*

We are made in the image of God, and God spoke and created.

We can also shape our world by our words.

**This is common denominator in all successful people - is that they envisioned their success, before they enjoyed it.**

- We have many successful entrepreneurs in our church community and they first had a vision before there was manifestation of their business.
- I could somewhat relate - this church was a vision in my heart before we had a single member.
- Last weekend, my family had to opportunity to learn from a church in Northern California. It was so amazing to see how healthy and powerful that church was. We had dinner with the Pastor and his wife and he was sharing how when he was 36 years old and had only 8 people in a living room, he knew in his heart that God wanted to grow the church to 10,000. 23 years later, they are at 8,000 now. He asked me if I had a number in my spirit for the church...I told him I did...I already got it before we ever launched. You might be asking, "Why would you set yourself up for disappointment?" I rather dream of reaching thousands and fail (just reaching hundreds) than succeed in being negative and lazy.
- There is a new movie that is out called Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. Meg was sharing with me that Fred Rogers who was a pastor who when Television was getting popular, he wanted to make sure there was positive content for children and he wanted to share God's Kingdom values. The whole show was his idea and he initially composed all the music, and did the puppet characters. It became an award winning show, and he got to mentor millions of kids with Kingdom values. His vision became reality. What an innovator, what a pioneer! He saw it before he did it! He believed he could when a lot of people told him that he was crazy.

**Now, I'm not saying the success is magic, and I'm not suggesting that you "just imagine it and it will appear".**

Not at all.

There is blood, sweat, tears, and tenacity is required.

There are some people who want a *vision* to become manifested in a day, or for someone to serve it to them on a silver platter. Yet if we aren't willing to pay the price and be resilient - we are living in a fantasy world.

Now, I believe that it is having a big vision that causes us to pay the price for it. **We get lazy because we don't have a consuming vision from God.**

I remember hearing this story of a pastor who moved to LA and felt so defeated in his ministry. He felt called to the City of Angels and yet he couldn't get out of bed because he was so depressed. Then, he realized that if he was going to see anything *shift in his ministry* he needed to have a *shift in his mentality*. So he took a shower, put on the most expensive suit that he owned, and took the bus to a five star hotel - and just made the foyer his office. *He would begin to feel more successful.* He would study there, he would get on the pay phone and do counseling and called some other churches if they needed a guest speaker. He started to feeling differently about himself, he began to work more diligently, God did exceedingly abundantly above all he could ask or imagine!

***Do you believe that God will do amazing things in and through your life? Do you feel it?***

Caleb felt like God was going to do something great, marvelous, and supernatural things for His people, the rest of the Israelites did not believe....(Next week, we will be preaching on moving from Cynicism into Childlikeness - Caleb had this childlike excitement, while the others had cynicism.)

So check out what God said about them....

**“They will never even see the land I swore to give their ancestors. None of those who have treated me with contempt will ever see it. **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 14:23-24)****

When we believe God, our descendants will be the ones who will benefit. That’s why it’s important to *dream big*, our dream will bless not just our generation, also the next generation...

Now the other Israelites were prohibited from entering into the Promised Land because of their small thinking.

- They had a grasshopper complex.
- They refused to repent of the sin of small thinking - which was quite insulting to an all-powerful God, who says what He means and means what He says.

Now, we don’t think of small thinking as a sin.

It's not like it is lying, murdering, and stealing.  
However, small-thinking lies, murders, and robs....

**What is a lie?** It is disagreeing with the God of truth. If God is saying you can do something and you say, "I can't" then you are warring against truth, and that the same spirit as *LYING*.

**What is murder?** It's short-circuiting someone's potential and possibilities. Small thinking murders our own potential and possibilities. Small thinking is an abortion doctor- taking the life of the dream that God has deposited in our spirit.

**What is stealing?** It's taking from someone something that should have been theirs. If we take away from someone something that they should have received, it's stealing. If you should have received a package from Amazon and someone takes it and keeps you from getting it - it's stealing. I wonder what God put you on this earth to deliver, and what our generation should be receiving from you and yet we never received it because small thinking hijacked the delivery.

- Have you ever heard this phrase that when we are wasting time at work- we are stealing from the company? I wonder if we are just wasting our time on the earth, and not serving the divine purpose by which we were called - if that would be considered stealing? Small thinking keeps us from manifesting our own purpose, destiny, and calling.
- *(Come to growth track next Sunday!)*

*So small thinking is a liar, a murderer, and a thief and yet we think it's noble and call it humility.*



Now, we know one of the other ten commandments is ***“You shall not covet...”***

Small thinking makes us covet what other big thinkers and archivers have.

- Those who think small may be jealous of, critical of, and resentful towards those who dream big and do big things, however, everyone simply got what they **envisioned** and **expected**.
- They may say “life isn’t fair, yet God is very just.”
- Instead of **coveting** they should just start **dreaming** with God and allowing the Spirit too stretch their small thinking, so that they can enjoy the Promised Land too.

I’m sure while Caleb (@calebtheconquerour) was sipping his Promiseland Pina Colada and adds the location: the Promised Land. When all the other Israelites can see him on Instagram enjoying what He believed God for - they would be so envious. However, they all simply got what they expected.

**We don’t not have to hate, we can create.**

Don’t be a hater, be a creator!

Coveting is a waste of time, it keeps us from creating.

God creates.

Satan just covets.

**Here are four characteristics of grasshoppers:**

- 1) **Travel in packs.** When we have a grasshopper complex, we are so easily conform to the culture around us. We just jump on fads and bandwagons.
  - However, Jesus called us to *impact* the world, not be *influenced* by the world. We are to be *shifting* culture, not *seduced* by it.
  - Caleb was willing to say what nobody else was saying. He and Joshua decided to go against the current of what everyone else was saying. Everyone was trying to shoot them down and discourage them and they were un-discourageable and willing to live *with conviction* - rather than *for popularity*.
  - It takes courage to take a stand for what you believe in.
  
- 2) **Ravage the land without replenishing.** The grasshopper complex turns people into leeches and freeloaders - those who take and take - and the reason they don't give and share and replenish others is not just because they are being *selfish* - yet they may really believe that they don't have anything to offer.
  - They become a burden more than a blessing. They suck the life out of you, versus imparting life. Soon people don't want to hang out with them anymore.
  - However, I hope there would start seeing themselves as God sees them. God deposited an amazing gift inside of them, and they really need to be sharing it and serving it to others, and using it to build God's Kingdom. (We want you to serve the gifts God has given you and join us on our mission to bring hearts back to God...Join us the next Sunday at 11:15 for our Discovery Class.)
  
- 3) **Eat one another.** The grasshopper complex makes us envious of fellowship human beings- who are dreaming and achieving.

- When we are *envious* we become *critical* and *vicious* towards the subject of our envy.
- However, we should be **creating** rather than **coveting**. We should be busy building our own portfolios rather than tearing down someone else's accomplishments and reputation.

- 4) **Devoured by other creatures.** It has been observed that a grasshopper will not fight when it is attacked, rather it will freeze.
- The grasshopper complex makes us freeze in the face of opposition. We just feel fearful and helpless!
  - When temptation attacks, put up a fight. When depression comes knocking on our door, we should put up a fight. When anxiety tries to pin us down, we should put up a fight. The Scriptures tell us too resist the devil - and that means that we put up a fight, not just freeze and do nothing.
  - **Isn't that funny that this grasshopper is vicious enough to eat their own kind are too cowardly to stand up to opposition?**
  - Sometimes the same people who are so vicious and violent and resilient when it comes to gossip and slander and backbiting are the biggest cowards when it comes to battling their own addictions and stepping into their own destiny.
  - You will notice that the people who are most critical of what you are doing - are also those who don't have the guts to do what you do.
  - Don't let a grasshopper discourage you.

I am reminded of this story I heard of a boy who asked his dad on a fishing trip, ***"Dad, why do you only keep the small fish and throw away the big fish?"*** His dad replied, ***"The answer is simple my son, we only have a six inch frying pan at home."***

Think about all the amazing opportunities they (forfeited and) *threw back*, because their pan was so small. I wonder how many opportunities we miss out on, because our thinking is so small.

**Instead of throwing away big fish, we just need to get a bigger pan.**

- We can't enjoy the abundant life that Jesus came to give us (John 10:10), when we have a tiny pan!

God is trying to expand our thinking!

**Our God takes the humble and lowly and gives them big dreams!**

- If we don't dream a little bigger, we are settling for a **lie** (holding our opinion above God's Word.)
- If we don't dream bigger, we are **murdering** (our potential and maybe even our calling).
- If we don't dream a little bigger, we are **stealing** (robbing our generation and the next generation - of what we should have served it.)

If we don't dream bigger, we will only **criticize** someone who is dreaming and **covet** what they are manifesting.

I hope today we can repent of the sin of small-thinking!

And that we would say to the Holy Spirit, stretch my thinking!

**This is why the Holy Spirit gives us dreams and visions (Acts 2:17) - because God needs to expand our minds before He can expand our territory!**

Caleb was able to see from God's perspective...while the others didn't. I hope we can see from God's perspective!

**Why does God have to change people's names before they changed their lives?**

God needed the change the way they saw and felt about themselves!

No **Abram**, your name will be **Abraham** (father of many nations).

No **Sarai**, your name will be **Sarah** (princess).

No **Jacob** your name will be **Israel** (prince with God).

No **Simon**, your name will be **Peter** (a rock)!

Before their lives changed...their names changed!

***God is saying, "I need you to change how you feel about yourself....in other words - I need you to get a bigger pan - so you don't keep throwing away all I want to bless you with."***

I am praying that you will leave this place FEELING like God is about to do some big things in and through your life.