

Living Large: Lessons From Old Testament Heroes”

Week 1:

Numbers 13:26-14:9

THE BIG IDEA: We live “large lives” when we trust God and live by faith instead of being restricted by fear.

OPEN WITH PRAYER

GETTING STARTED: What was the highlight of your summer?

LEARNING & APPLYING GOD’S WORD This week we begin a new series of messages we’ve entitled *Living Large: Lessons from Old Testament Heroes*. During the next couple of months, we will explore the lives of some OT characters who lived large lives. Large in the sense that even though they were ordinary people, they lived extraordinary lives and God used them to do great things.

This week we will take a look at Joshua and Caleb and how they responded to what seemed like an impossible situation. They were part of 12 spies who were sent on a reconnaissance mission into the Promised Land. Moses gave the spies a dual mission: one, a check on the military power of the people who inhabited the land; two, an agricultural report. After being freed by God from the Egyptians two years earlier, the Israelites are now on the doorstep of entering into the land promised by God to their forefathers. The report of Joshua and Caleb (the minority report) is vastly different than that of the other 10 spies (the majority report).

Together, read Numbers 13:26-14:9

1. What report do the spies give to Moses, Aaron and the Israelite community after forty days of spying in the Promised Land (13:26-29)?
2. How does Caleb’s report differ from that of the other 10 spies (13:30)?
3. Describe the reaction of the people to the differing reports (14:1-4,10).
4. Is the people’s desire to return to slavery in Egypt surprising? Why or why not?

5. Try to imagine that you are part of the Israelite assembly standing on the edge of the Promised Land. What thoughts and feelings might you have as you listened to both reports?
6. What characteristics do you see in Joshua and Caleb? How are they different from the other ten spies?
7. In Numbers 32:10-12 we learn that due to their lack of faith in the promise and power of God, except for Joshua and Caleb, this generation of Israelites never entered the Promised Land. It would be 38 more years until the people finally crossed the Jordan River into the land God had promised them. Have you discovered in your own life that you sometimes miss out on God's blessing and power by not taking steps of faith and trusting him? Do you believe that we can "activate" God's blessing in our lives by trusting him? Does trusting God enable us to live "larger lives"?

LIVING OUT "REAL LIFE"

8. What are the "giants" confronting you today? What can you learn from the example of Joshua and Caleb? Are there any steps you can take in dealing with your "giants"?

SHARING AND PRAYER (Prayer Requests)

Take some time to share prayer requests, where you need to find God's grace and peace. Be sure to give thanks for each other and pray for one another's needs. When we pray together, we find the power of God.

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