

“Full-On”

Made For More Sermon Series | Week Eleven | Newbreak Church

March 20th, 2022

Newbreak’s Sermon Study Guide is an in-house resource that serves sermon-based Life Groups and/or individuals who want to reflect further on how the message contributes to our spiritual formation.

In this week’s study, we talk about what it looks like to live “wholeheartedly” for God. The question we want to ask ourselves is: “How do I become a fully devoted follower of Jesus?” And we will take note of what we can learn from Caleb.

Icebreakers for Life Groups

- What is your favorite cereal? Why? Did you have it as a kid?
- What is a task or chore you only put minimal effort into? Example: cutting corners when vacuuming.

Going Deeper Into the Message

Read Joshua 14:6–14

How do I become a fully devoted follower of Jesus?

Point 1 – Passionately pursue God for all of my life for the rest of my life.

The book of Joshua is not all about Joshua, as we have seen, there are other noteworthy characters like Rahab, Achan, and the Gibeonites. But one character who can teach us a lot about what it means to live with passion is Caleb.

*“I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and **I can still travel and fight as well as I could then**” (Joshua 14:11, NLT).*

By this time, Caleb was 80-years-old! And he was reminiscing of events about forty years ago saying he is just as passionate about obeying God now as back then. We might think of people like Tom Brady aging well, and he sure does! But Caleb is an example of this too. Of course, we aren’t just talking about those who can throw a perfect spiral into double coverage, but about those who age well in terms of their

passion for God's purpose. This is not just about Caleb *finishing well*, Caleb had been staying the course for many years.

Numbers 13 tells the story of when Moses sent 12 spies into the promised land to scout it out. Ten of them affirmed how great the land was, but they gave a bad report by talking about how it would be impossible to take. Joshua and Caleb were the only two that came back with a good report and the confidence that they could indeed take the land. Remember, this was not something like a coin toss—they might be able to conquer the land, or they might not—it's not left up to chance. God gave His word that He would give them the land; that's why it was called the "promised land," because God promised to give it to them. What did the Israelites have to do? Their job was to see the land through the eyes of faith, promise, and possibility. Caleb and Joshua did that! And God granted them to be the only ones from their generation to be able to go into the promised land and to have many adventures because of their willingness to take God at his word.

In a time of despair, those with resilient optimism are those who have a "different spirit" about them, like Caleb taking God at His word when it comes to seeing the promised land. So be the most optimistic person in the room.

Pursuing God means living "differently," which is what Caleb was known for.

This is what God says about Caleb...

But because my servant **Caleb has a different spirit** and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it (Numbers 14:24, NIV)

It is the trademark description of Caleb in Numbers 14 and also in Joshua 14—when he was 40 and when he was 80! When the people saw a problem, he saw a possibility tied to the promises of God. Being "different" because of his passion and courage was a trademark of his life.

What's your trademark as a Jesus-follower?

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- What about Caleb's story inspires you? Reflect on Numbers 13–14 if you need a reference.

- What did it mean for Caleb to have a “different spirit”? What does that look like today? How about for you, personally?
- Caleb was passionate about God his whole life. Who can you think of that you know is someone whose passion for God has grown with their age? What about them do you admire?

How do I become a fully devoted follower of Jesus?

Point 2 – Move into the new territory that God presents.

Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.” (Numbers 13:30 NIV)

God said that He had given them the land. In fact, He *promised* it. Caleb had full faith and trust that God would do what He said He would do. Caleb went to check out the land. Yep, the land was there, just as God said. Yep, the land was good, just as God said. Yep, there weren’t enemies of God in the land, just as God said. God said He would get them out of Egypt and He did. God said He would save them from the Egyptian army and He did. Caleb had no doubt that God would give him and his people victory against the enemy they were now facing.

Caleb was completely faithful to God by God’s own testimony of Caleb, *But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it (Numbers 14:24)*. So, God immediately gave Caleb the land He promised him? Nope. That didn’t happen. Caleb was obedient to God and yet he still had to wander in the wilderness because of the disobedience of members of his community. He had to wait patiently to go in and take possession of what was rightfully his. This could have been a time for Caleb to become bitter and grouchy and grumbling. He could have said, “I did the work. I gave the good report. I followed my God with all of my heart. And now I have to suffer wandering around this wilderness for 40 years, eating nothing but manna and quail and water, because these cowards couldn’t trust our God?! I could be sitting at home right now having steak and milk and honey for dessert. But no. These guys had to go and mess all of that up for me!”

That’s what Caleb *could* have done. But I bet you what he did instead was to build up anticipation in the camp for how God was going to give them victory against their enemies when they were done with the consequence of their unbelief. I bet he took the sons of the men who were going to die in the wilderness and started a training program

for them. I bet you he taught people how to fight in battle. I bet you he taught classes in strategies of warfare and brought up leaders who could teach the younger kids. I bet he was the encourager of the camp and made it his mission to keep the vision of victory in the Promised Land alive. I bet he ate healthy and took care of himself with the expectation that the giants he saw when he went to spy out the land would still be there waiting for him when it was time. I bet he visualized the land and the enemy and how he would take it to be his. I bet he dreamed of the houses he would build and the food he would grow once God gave him rest. I bet Caleb's "different spirit" kept him excited for what God had promised.

God has a promise for you that He wants you to take hold of. Maybe you have made some decisions that have knocked that plan off course. Maybe you think it's too late. Caleb waited 40 years to take hold of his promise from God. While he was waiting he was growing toward what God had for him. Go into the Promised Land God has for you. In the power of the Holy Spirit, defeat the giants that are there and He will give you rest. [For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. \(2 Corinthians 1:20a\).](#)

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- What "territory" do you think God is leading you to possess? What does this look like for you?
- How has God prepared you for victory in this? What education do you have that would help? What gifts, talents, skills, or experience do you have that could move you in the right direction?
- If you think you need more preparation to have victory, what do you need to do? What training do you still need? Create a plan to move forward on that today.

How do I become a fully devoted follower of Jesus?

Point 3 – Walk everywhere God leads.

If you're going to follow Jesus, you have to step where He steps. Caleb continued to move toward what God had next for him. His faith had feet.

[So Joshua blessed Caleb...and gave Hebron to him as his portion of land...because he wholeheartedly followed the Lord, the God of Israel \(Joshua 14:13–14, NLT\).](#)

In context, Caleb wanted this part of the land so that he could continue to drive out the remaining enemies in the land. After all, God wanted his people to continue to press into their destiny, so Caleb was being obedient to what God had asked. **Spiritual maturity is the gap between when God asks us to do something and when we do what He asks.**

Close the gap!

Wholehearted comes from the Hebrew verb *mālē'* which most literally means: “to fill; fill up.” 3x in Joshua 14, Caleb is said to be “wholehearted” in his devotion to God. Caleb’s heart for God wasn’t up for inspection of being half-empty or half-full, because his heart was “full” and on fire for God through the ages and stages of his life. And yet, this was not the sentiment of an old man riding off into the sunset, remembering the good old days of yesteryear, wistfully paying final homage to the past. The fire that animated him then still burned in him now, and the desire to see God’s promise come to pass was as bright and clear in him as ever.

How many things in our life do we actually do wholeheartedly? In fact, our culture (outside of church) even uses the phrase “half-hearted” sometimes (“He gave a half-hearted effort”, “It just doesn’t seem like his heart is in this.”) So it’s a powerful and rare concept when people go “all in” with something.

Being fully devoted is not about us getting more of God, but about God getting more of us.

A.W. Tozer once said something stunning: “We have as much of God as we want.” This is stunning because we often paint the picture like God is somehow holding back from us. But if Tozer is right, then the onus is on us.

\$3 Worth of God

“I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine. I don't want enough of God to make me love a poor man or make a sacrifice for the cause. I want ecstasy, not transformation; I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth. I want a pound of the eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy \$3 worth of God please.” – Wilbur Rees

How much of God will we have? It will come down to how much of God we are willing to give of ourselves.

Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Looking at the word study on “wholeheartedly” (above), what sticks out to you, or challenges you?
- Read the “\$3 worth of God” excerpt above. Does this speak to what is said in many churches? How about in your own life?
- Wrestle with Tozer’s quote: “We have as much of God as we want.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?

—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—

How are you going to think or live differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?

How does this week’s message shape or nurture your relationship with God?

BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids in a way that they would relate to or understand?