

THE MAKING OF A MAN #7

Caleb



“But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit, has followed Me fully.” Num 14:24

A young man saw a 90 year old couple eating at MacDonald's. He noticed the man had ordered one meal and an extra cup. He watched the old man carefully cut their burger exactly in half, then count each fry equally and pour precisely half the soda in her cup. His wife started to eat as the old man watched. The young man asked if he could buy another meal so they wouldn't have to split one. The old man said, "*No thanks sonny. Been married 71 years. We share everything 50-50. Yes sir 50-50! Always have, always will!*" The young man asked, "Well aren't you going to eat?" He replied, "*No, it's her turn with the teeth!*"

That night the old man leans over, kiss-

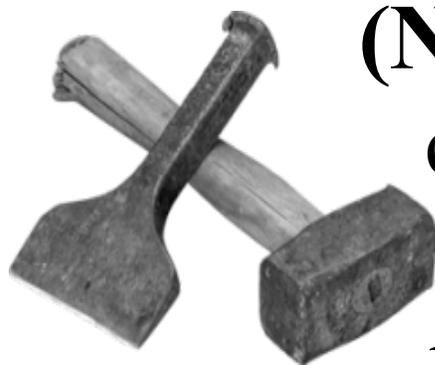
es his wife on the cheek and says,
“*Honey, you want to run up stairs and
make passionate love?*” She smiles,
“*Sweetie, it’s going to have to be one or
the other!*” You got to love an old dog
who is still **young at heart** and **pas-**
sionate to finish well. Such was Caleb
(Lit. ‘*dog*’ or ‘*slave*’) at 85!

CALEB AT 40 YEARS

(Numbers 13:25-14:27) The Lord had graciously rescued His people out of the brutal physical slavery in Egypt (Ex 12-14) and saved them from the spiritual bondage of sin into a relationship with Him as promised (Ex 12:1-14; John 1:29; I Cor 5:7). About 18 months later

after marveling at God's faithful provision (Ex 16-17), receiving His 10 commandments (Ex 19-20) and building the Tabernacle (Ex 35-40), God's people were poised to enter the Promised Land (Israel). Rather than trusting God to move forward, they pressed Moses to first let them send in 12 spies to check out the land (Dt 1:22). Ten men returned "*walking by sight*" (II Cor 5:7; Heb 11:1, 6) with a bad report of unbelief challenging the faithfulness of God saying "*We are not able*" (Num 13:31-32) the enemy is too big. Caleb and Joshua trusted God by proclaiming "**Our God is able**" (Num 13:30; Dan 3:17; Phil 4:13; Eph 3:20). There were 4 men of faith when the spies returned that day:

Moses and **Aaron** fell on their faces in prayer begging God to forgive and change the hearts of the people (Num 14:11-21). **Joshua** and **Caleb** tried to persuade the people that God always provides where His hand clearly guides (Num 14:6-10). In what ways does Caleb's outlook on life and trust in God encourage you to **“follow Him fully?”**



(Numbers 13:25-14:27) What chisels did God use to carve Caleb into a fierce warrior, passionate follower and

FAITHFUL FINISHER?

(Numbers 13:28, 32, 33; Matt 14:26-31. Hint: “we saw”) Like Peter, what did Caleb learn when we take our eyes off God’s character? How can we train our **EYES** to focus on God’s character so that we “*walk by faith and not by sight*” (2 Cor 4:17-18; 5:7)? Your body/life always follows your ‘eyes’! On what have your “eyes” been focused?



(Numbers 13:27-33) The majority report (conventional wisdom) is often very wrong. But when you are with Christ, you are always in the majority! Every day

He asks His men, “Will you take a risk and speak up for Me as a majority or will you remain silent playing it safe as the world majority presses against you? Will you cower/cave or courageously trust Me when you are tested? My testing gives you a great testimony!” How does Caleb’s attitude and courage challenge you to pursue Christ even more realizing that a **faith that can’t be TESTED** can’t be **TRUSTED**? Give an example!



(Numbers 14:1-4) Will you press forward trusting the Lord when things seem tough or complain and retreat to your old way of

life? How does Caleb's negative peer situation overlap with yours? How can you relate to Caleb's situation?

(Num 14:3-4, 22) In these verses and 9 other times (Ex 14:11-12; 15:23-24; 16:2, 20, 27; 17:1-3; 32:7; Num 11:1; Num 11:14) the vast majority of God's people wanted to go back to their old way of life (Egypt) rather than follow the Lord in the new life He offers.

Where are you tempted to do the same? Are you pursuing God's new life (2 Cor 5:21) or constantly sliding back to the old? How practically can you stop sliding back to old habits, sins, patterns?

(Num 14:6-10) On what aspects of God's character did Caleb focus to keep his courage in the midst of overwhelming negativity and lack of faith among his people? Where do you see Caleb shouting with his life *“Hey, let's move forward in this great calling because we have a great God!”*



CALEB AT 85 YEARS (Joshua 14:6-14) Fast forward 45 long years. Of the 2.5 million original folks rescued by God from Egypt, only Joshua and Caleb as the Dynamic Duo remain. An entire generation dies off having never experi-

enced God's Promised Land because they would not trust Him! Instead, they wander in the wilderness witnessing 152 funerals a day as a reminder of what they had missed! What have you missed out on because you would not trust God?

(Josh 14:6, 10-12) The key to our faithfulness is not a grinding resignation but being *'full of faith'* in the steadfast character of the Father in both the good times and bad (1 Cor 1:9; Heb 10:23; 2 Tim 2:13; Phil 3:12-14). Where do you



see Caleb's focus on the character of God and His awesome faithfulness during the hard years? Where is your present focus? In the movie 'Apollo 13' the astronauts needed **'one fixed point'** to courageously attempt against all odds, to make it back to earth. What was Caleb's one fixed point that gave him the courage to finish faithfully against all odds rather than cave to the pressures of his culture?



(Joshua 14:8, 9, 14; Heb 10:23; Matt 25:21; I Pet 4:19; Luke 12:42-44) What key character quality had the

Lord chiseled into the heart of Caleb

over the years that made him a **FAITHFUL** finisher and not just a spectacular starter? How is He carving the same into your heart? What will be the key to finishing your life faithfully?

(Joshua 14:6, 10-13) On what key aspect of God's character did Caleb focus which gave him the courage to ask for the most difficult part of the land (well fortified "*hill country*") to inhabit?

How seriously did Caleb take the phrase **“the Lord had spoken”**? What hard thing will you ask the Lord to help you



to accomplish these next few months? Will you patiently endure by trusting Him or give up and quit when things get tough? Will you seek hard after His awesome promises or give up in discouragement? For what difficult thing are you asking the Lord to help you accomplish?

(Josh 14:12) Napoleon once conquered an important island in the Mediterranean Sea. As the generals were discussing their victory, a young officer asked to see Napoleon. He came boldly before the emperor and asked, “Give me this island as my



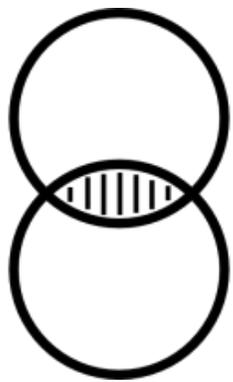
own!” To the amazement of the generals, Napoleon immediately granted him his request for the strategic island.

“How could you do that?” asked the generals. “What made him worthy to receive this great island?” Napoleon responded, “I gave him the island because *he honored me with the magnitude of his request!*” **Like Caleb, what seemingly impossible thing will you ask the Father to help you conquer for His glory, trusting Him to be your strength?**



(Joshua 14:7-8) As you grow older will your heart get better or bitter? As you grow older

how can you keep your heart young and vibrant in the Lord instead of crusty and complaining in our culture?



What about Caleb's life intersects with yours? What do you most admire in the life and attitude of this old guy? Why?



TAG TEAMS

Jesus finished well! How does Caleb's life point you to your need of Christ and His grace to

finish faithfully? Where do you see Caleb responding to God's amazing grace? How is the mindset of the Apostle Paul in the following verses similar to that of Caleb and how do their attitudes motivate you to be more like Jesus? (Phil 1:20-21; 3:13-14; II Tim 4:6-8)

