



Caleb: "Give me my mountain!"

MEN'S GROWTH CHALLENGE

Let's dive right into this month's Growth Challenge, featuring one of my personal heroes from the Bible – Caleb.

What a legend! At eighty-five years old, Caleb claims the land God had promised him forty-five years earlier. He tells Joshua, "Now give me this hill country that the Lord promised me that day." (Joshua 14:12 NIV). In other words, Caleb's saying, "Give me my mountain!" He's fired up and ready to go to battle, even though the land is occupied by giants in fortified cities. As he tells Joshua, "If GOD goes with me, I will drive them out, just as GOD said." (Joshua 14:14 MSG).

Q. WHAT ARE YOU FIGHTING FOR?

I love that Caleb was courageous enough to fight for the right things – a promise from God, a dream for his future, and a legacy for his descendants. He wasn't getting any younger. He'd faced disappointment and frustration from delays caused by the negativity of others. And yet he remained courageous and focused on what truly mattered.

Q. HOW DO WE BECOME MEN LIKE CALEB?

God said that Caleb had a "different spirit" (see Joshua 14:24). We need men today with a different spirit – one that's hope-filled and faith-filled in a negative and often fearful world. As men of God, we have the Holy Spirit living in us. 2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT) says: "For God has not

given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”

In addition to having a different spirit, Caleb followed God wholeheartedly. (See Joshua 14:8–9,14.) This was his distinguishing trait and the secret to his success. Caleb didn’t follow God half-heartedly – he was 100% in. Men, you can’t live half-heartedly for God and expect wholehearted results.

When you follow God wholeheartedly, He will shape you into a different kind of man. Whatever your past story might be, God will shape your future – until you can proclaim with passion and fire, “Give me my mountain!”

Caleb’s wholehearted relationship with God helped him endure a long and difficult season of life. We all have those. Maybe you’re in one right now. I encourage you, don’t give up; instead, learn from Caleb.

Q. **WHAT’S IN YOUR SPIRIT?**

Don’t let negative voices crush the hope-filled, faith-filled spirit God put inside you.

Let’s backtrack to when Caleb (aged forty) was one of twelve scouts sent to survey Canaan, the land God had promised Israel. On their return, all twelve agreed that Canaan was a land of milk and honey. But ten of the scouts were very negative. Rather than focus on God’s promise, they focused on the problems. They claimed the land was impossible to invade because the tribes living there were too powerful.

These men left God out of the equation. Because they lacked faith, they saw only challenges. We can get like that sometimes but let me say this clearly: snap out of it! Negativity might feel good for a moment, but it will never take your life forward.

Because Caleb had a different spirit and followed God wholeheartedly, he didn’t let the negativity of those around him influence his perspective. He knew God was with them. And so Caleb expected victory. Yes, there were real battles to fight. Yes, there were real challenges. But Caleb wasn’t overwhelmed by them because he knew God was greater than any opposition they faced. He even said of the enemy tribes: “They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the Lord is with us!” (Numbers 14:9 NLT).

What are you expecting for your life, your future, your family, your business, career, or ministry? Don’t lower your expectation to the lowest common denominator. Lift it as God stirs faith in your heart.

The sad reality is that, in this story, negativity literally took out a generation, while Caleb – full of faith and hope – continued to grow spiritually and emotionally. What a contrast!

Because of their lack of faith, the Israelites ended up on a forty-year detour in the wilderness. Caleb wasn't spared this long detour, even though none of it was his fault. Yet he didn't allow a delayed promise to produce a diminished life.

So, how did Caleb persevere, keep a pure heart, hold onto God's promise, and become the poster boy for age-defying 85-year-olds? Caleb made courageous choices, and you can do the same.

Q. WHAT WILL YOU CHOOSE?

Choose to have faith and hope. Don't give into bitterness. Stay focused and faithful. And you will get stronger. This really is a choice.

Maybe you need to recover something you stopped believing for – a promise, a calling, a conviction, a dream God planted in your heart. Don't confuse delay with denial. Just because it hasn't happened yet doesn't mean God has forgotten. Like Caleb, keep the faith, develop a different spirit, follow God wholeheartedly, and courage will rise in you. I believe God is stirring men to cry out like Caleb and say to the Lord, "Give me my mountain!"

Let me encourage you with the story of my father-in-law, Douglas Wylie (aka the Irish General). Douglas had been in business all his life, but he'd always dreamed of being part of a church plant. He was eighty when he chose to move from Sydney to Cape Town to help plant Hillsong Church there. He was a real-life Caleb. If Douglas can fight for his mountain at eighty, so can you!

One of my life verses is Galatians 6:9 (NIV): *"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."*

Until next time ...

Phil