

Session 1

The Land Under Our Feet

Joshua 14:1-15

Memory Verse

My brothers who went with me caused the people to lose heart, but I followed the Lord my God completely.

– Joshua 14:8, CSB



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Session


The Land Under Our Feet

THEOLOGICAL THEME: God always keeps His word and fulfills His promises. When God’s people follow Him wholeheartedly, they will reap the benefits and blessings that come from being faithful to God.

At what age do people typically start serving in the church? What age does someone “retire” from serving? In many churches today, people overlook the usefulness of all ages. Some attempt to keep younger people from serving until they are older and more mature while others overlook the value of using older adults as leaders. The truth is there is no perfect age to do what God has called you to do.

The key is that when God calls you to serve, you should serve. When God calls you to step out in faith, that is the right time to step out in faith. The account we will study today is a great reminder that neither youth nor age disqualifies us from leading and setting a strong example for others to follow. The capacity for godly leadership is about the **heart of a person** and his or her relationship with the Lord. Caleb was a shining example both as a younger person and as an older person. The consistent thing we see with his life is that he trusted God and that made the difference.

 Have you ever thought about where you would like to spend retirement?
Doing what?

 How do you see value in both younger and older people leading and serving?

Session Summary

After taking possession of the promised land, the time came to divide the land among the various tribes. Joshua diligently assigned the land according to the plans of the Lord.

Caleb reminded Joshua of the promises made to him years earlier about the land under his feet. He referred to the time when they had gone into the land as spies and stressed that he had followed the Lord completely and served Him faithfully (see Numbers 13). In response, Joshua honored Caleb's request on behalf of God, who always keeps His promises. **Those who follow the Lord and serve Him will be blessed.**

1. Dividing the Land (Joshua 14:1-5)

Once the promised land was secured, the land needed to be assigned to each of the tribes of Israel. Leaders from each tribe gathered and, under Joshua's leadership, they cast lots for the different plots of Canaan. Although there were technically twelve tribes of Israel, the two sons of Joseph were included as leaders of their own tribes, and no land was given directly to the Levites, totaling thirteen groups to consider.

Imagine the anticipation as leaders from each branch of the Israelites gathered to find out what portion of the promised land would be theirs. Their future and the future of their families would be forever affected by the decisions made that day. Each leader wanted the best for their tribe and likely had certain ideas about what would work out most favorably for them.



What factors might have played into the desires of each leader in receiving their plot of land?

Despite individual preferences, the process was to cast lots. This was designed and directed by the Lord following the guidelines He gave Moses earlier. Under the direction of the Lord, Joshua, and Eleazar the priest, the process was straightforward and clear. With all the tribe leaders gathered to supervise and observe, they began to divide the land.

? Why does it matter that the process of dividing the land was designed and directed by the Lord? How did this determine the future of the leaders and their families? How often do you think of your life as being directed by the Lord?

We learn that only nine and a half tribes were allotted land that day because two and half tribes had requested that they be given land on the other side of the Jordan river. This took place when the children of Israel were gathered on the wilderness side of the Jordan preparing to cross the river and begin the process of taking the promised land (see Joshua 13).

? Application: What do you learn about trusting the Lord through how the land was divided? In what sense might this be viewed as leaving things “to chance”? Why was that not the case? Why is that also not the case in your life?

2. The Promise (Joshua 14:6-9)

During the gathering, Caleb stepped forward with a request. Caleb was from the tribe of Judah and one of the twelve spies who had scouted the land prior to the conquest. About forty-five years earlier (see Joshua 13:10), Moses chose one man from each tribe and sent them into the promised land to spy out the situation (see Numbers 13). The spies were to bring back a report about the situation and what would be involved to move into the promised land and conquer the people living there.

Of the twelve spies sent, Caleb and Joshua were the only two to return with a positive report. While the other ten spies saw the obstacles and felt overwhelmed with the prospect of taking the land, Caleb saw the potential and believed that since God had given the land to them, He would enable and empower the Israelites to take it. The other ten spies were scared and believed Israel would be destroyed if they attempted to take the land. They didn't have faith in the Lord to trust Him for the victory, and the rest of the people listened to the ten spies instead of Joshua and Caleb.



What did you learn about Caleb's character in these verses? What quality of Caleb's life do you want for yourself?

That moment of poor decision-making for the people of Israel on the banks of the Jordan river, led to forty years of wandering in the wilderness. Now, they had finally reached the point where they could settle into the land God promised to them. Their unbelief resulted in their wandering because God would not allow the people of unbelief to reside in the place of His promise.



How do you see belief or unbelief in the Lord affecting your life? How have you rationalized away from doing what God has called you to do or bringing the presence of Jesus where He has planted you?

The people had not listened to Caleb's encouragement, but that did not change the fact that Caleb remained faithful to God. Those who had been unfaithful died in the wilderness wandering because of their sin. It only makes sense that Caleb's tribe would be the first to receive its allotment on the Canaan side of the Jordan. Caleb reminded Joshua about the promise Moses made to him regarding Caleb's future inheritance in the promised land.

Note the way Caleb recounted the previous conversation with their former leader. He was bold; he spoke with conviction; and he told the truth. He didn't say anything about himself that wasn't true, and he quoted the very thing Moses had said about him. We should be people who imitate Caleb's boldness, asking for what God has already promised. Moses described Caleb as following the Lord completely. If we faithfully follow the Lord as Caleb did, evidence will show up in our words and the way we live. Caleb's dedication to the Lord and his boldness in asking God to keep His promise were key factors in Caleb's request being granted.



Application: Where do you need to seek further faithfulness before God? Where do you need to be obedient in asking God to fulfill what He has promised in your life?

3. Following God Completely (Joshua 14:10-15)

Caleb made it clear his boldness and strength came from his faith in God. His advancing age didn't diminish him; he was still the same faithful man. Caleb's story is a good reminder that age is not the most important thing about a person standing for the Lord and making a difference—faith is.

Interestingly, Caleb did not ask for the easy road. The area he requested would come with a fight, and he wouldn't back down. The Anakim lived in that region, and they would need to be dealt with. Too many times, people who claim to be believers contentedly avoid spiritual battles. But Caleb willingly faced the battle because of his trust in God. Not only did he not avoid the conflict, but he also even asked for the opportunity to stand for the Lord against the enemy.

? What are some excuses you use today that may prevent you from living out the call God has given you? How does trust in God motivate us to stand for Him?

Part of Caleb's boldness came from remembering the activity of God in his life to that point. He remembered that God had been with him before and trusted God would empower him to face the enemy once again. Think about what it would mean in the church today for Christians to remember what God has already done on our behalf and then trust Him to do that and even more going forward. Many times, the church's lack of impact is not because God is unwilling to work but because we are unwilling to obey Him.

? What makes it hard for you to trust God for the victory in the battles we face? How does remembering God's past work in your life help?

Caleb did not leave the work to someone else. He continued leading with boldness, strength, and faith in every situation that came his way. Imagine if all members of the church decided to step up and do what needed to be done without looking for an excuse to leave the work to someone else. There would be no shortage of workers to fulfill the mission of the Lord.

Verse 14 describes Caleb clearly: “He followed the LORD, the God of Israel, completely.” That is the difference. Caleb did not halfway love the Lord. He did not pick and choose when to serve or trust God. He was not semi-committed to being a believer. He followed the Lord completely. His heart was focused one hundred percent on believing God, and he did not let anything distract or draw him from that. Can we say the same?



Application: What do you think God has called you to do? What keeps you from completely following the Lord today? What do you think is your next step?

Conclusion

The Lord is faithful, and He always keeps His promises. Although the children of Israel experienced forty years in the wilderness due to their rejection of God’s plan, He still brought them into the promised land. When it was time to distribute the land to the various tribes of Israel, leaders from each tribe gathered with Joshua and Eleazar, the priest, for the allotment as the Lord had commanded Moses years earlier.

Even though the fulfillment of God’s promises can take years, everything He God promises will happen at the right time, in His perfect timing. Caleb represented the tribe of Judah, and he brought a bold request concerning the land they were to receive. He recounted a promise Moses made when Caleb was one of the spies who scouted out the land and one of the only two in favor of trusting God and taking the land. Because of their faithfulness to the Lord, they promised Caleb he would receive the land under his feet for Judah.

This passage is a reminder that God keeps His promises. We can stand firm against the naysayers and doubters. We can continue the work of the Lord and “fight the good fight” because He has promised to be with us and empower us. Consider the land under your feet and whether you are trusting God the way you should or if you are believing those who act in fear and doubt. God’s people were meant to live in God’s land. Do you trust Him to bring it to pass?

❓ How have you been guilty of listening to those who are acting out of fear and doubt instead of faith in God?

❓ Where has God planted you? (Work, neighborhood, hobbies, interests, etc.) How is God calling you to live in these environments?

❓ How might you have a gospel conversation with another person based on today's study?

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).



FOR NEXT WEEK

The Gifts You Bring

Main Passages

- Ephesians 4:7-16

Session Outline

1. The Giving of Gifts (Ephesians 4:7-10)
2. The Purpose of Gifts (Ephesians 4:11-12)
3. The Goal of Gifts (Ephesians 4:13-16)

Memorize

My brothers who went with me caused the people to lose heart, but I followed the Lord my God completely.

- Joshua 14:8, CSB

Prayer

- 1.) Pray that God would show you the places He has for you to serve in your church and your community.
- 2.) Reflect on the promises of God and pray over how God fulfills those in your life and the lives of those around you.