

God's Faithful Servant

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[0 : 00] Please do turn to Joshua, and Joshua chapter 14, page 189 in the Church Vista Bible.

Now we're covering a big section this morning, from Joshua 14 through to the end of chapter 17. Now I don't propose that we read all of it, I will sort of do a guided reading through.

But you'll remember from last week that in chapter 13, we saw the beginning of a new section in the book of Joshua. We're moving from the conquest of the land to the carving up of the land, as Joshua gives each tribe its allotted portion in the land of Canaan.

And chapter 13 last week was a bit of a flashback, and there was a flashback to the east side of the Jordan. You'll remember my excellent map from the screen. And last week was all to do with the land east of the Jordan, which was conquered under Moses.

And he allocated two and a half tribes land east of the Jordan. And then in chapter 14 through to chapter 21, we read about the tribal inheritances west of the Jordan.

[1 : 12] So the land of Canaan that's just been conquered under Joshua. And in our section this morning, we're looking at the allocation for three tribes, for Judah, for Manasseh, and for Ephraim.

And we're going to be focusing on two conversations, one at the start in chapter 14, and one at the end in chapter 17. So we'll read all of chapter 14, and then we'll read a couple of sections from the following chapters, just so you get a sense as we read about the allocation of the land in Canaan.

So, chapter 14 and verse 1. These are the inheritances that the people of Israel received in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the people of Israel gave them to inherit.

Their inheritance was by lot, just as the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses for the nine and one-half tribes. For Moses had given an inheritance to the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan.

That was chapter 13. But to the Levites he gave no inheritance among them. For the people of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim.

[2 : 29] And no portion was given to the Levites in the land, but only cities to dwell in, with their pasture lands for their livestock and their substance. The people of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses.

They allotted the land. Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the Kenazite, said to him, You know what the Lord said to Moses, the man of God, in Kadesh Barnea concerning you and me.

I was forty years old when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land. And I brought him word again, as it was in my heart.

But my brothers, who went up with me, made the heart of the people melt. That's the other ten spies that went with them into the land. Yet I wholly followed the Lord my God.

And Moses swore on that day, saying, Surely the land on which your foot is trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.

[3 : 39] And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the Lord spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness.

And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me. My strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming.

So now, give me this hill country on which the Lord spoke on that day. For you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities.

It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out, just as the Lord said. Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, for an inheritance.

Therefore, Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, to this day, because he wholly followed the Lord, the God of Israel. Now, the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath Arba.

[4 : 48] Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim, and the land had rest from war. The allotment for the tribe of the people of Judah, according to their clans, reached southward to the boundary of Edom, to the wilderness of Zin, at the farthest south.

And then you get a big list detailing the boundary for the tribe of Judah. Tells you what cities they are to inherit, and exactly the boundaries of the land.

And Caleb was of that tribe. Caleb was in the tribe of Judah. And if you look down to verse 13, we see the fulfillment of what we've just read in that conversation.

He was promised the land of Hebron, and verse 13, we see that happening. According to the commandments of the Lord Joshua, he gave to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, a portion among the people of Judah.

Kiriath Arba, that is Hebron. Arba was the father of Anak. And Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak, Shashai and Ahaman and Talmai, the descendants of Anak.

[5 : 58] And then you get more detail about the land allocated to Judah. Looking on to chapter 16, and we see the tribal allocation for the other two tribes mentioned, the two tribes of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh.

So chapter 16, verse 1. The allotment of the people of Joseph went from the Jordan by Jericho, east of the waters of Jericho, into the wilderness, going up from Jericho into the hill country to Bethel.

Then, going from Bethel to Luz, it passes along to Ataroth, the territory of the Archites. Then it goes down westwards to the territory of Jephalites, as far as the territory of lower Beth-Horon.

Then to Giza, and it ends at the sea. The people of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, received their inheritance. The territory of the people of Ephraim by their clans was as follows.

And then you get details for the tribe of Ephraim. Look on to chapter 17, verse 1. And we see the following bit is all to do with the allotment made to the people of Manasseh.

[7 : 07] And then once that's all been allocated, you get another conversation with Joshua. Look on to chapter 17, and verse 14. Then the people of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, although I am a numerous people, since all along the Lord has blessed me?

And Joshua said to them, If you are a numerous people, go up by yourselves to the forest, and there clear ground for yourselves, in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for ye.

The people of Joshua said, Sorry, the people of Joseph said, The hill country is not enough for us. Yet all the Canaanites who dwell on the plain have chariots of iron, both those in Bethshean and its villages, and those in the valley of Jezreel.

Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, You are a numerous people, and have great power.

You shall not have one allotment only, but the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest, you shall clear it, and possess it for its furthest boundaries.

[8 : 29] For you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong. This is the word of the Lord.

May he bless it to us this morning. As we come to the Lord's word in just a moment, let's gather our hearts and pray.

Blessed Lord, who has caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such ways hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and hold fast to the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you've given to us through your saviour, Jesus Christ.

So speak to us, Father, as we come to your word. Strengthen us. Draw near to us. For you have made great promises to your people.

And might we be a people that live by faith and not by sight. Please help us, for we ask it. In Jesus' name. Amen. Do please have those chapters from Joshua open in front of you as we think about these together.

[10 : 00] Now we're taking a big chunk this morning. It runs, as we've seen, from the start of chapter 14 through to the end of 17. And these detail the inheritances for the most significant tribes, for Judah and for the two tribes of Joseph, as we've seen, Ephraim and Manasseh.

And we're going to focus on two conversations with Joshua in this big section. One at the start and one at the end. One conversation between Joseph and Joshua and one conversation between Caleb and Joshua.

One, an example of faith and the other, an example of unbelief. One, an example to follow and the other, an example to reject.

Two conversations, but two very different attitudes to God's promised inheritance. This whole middle section in the book of Joshua is all about the tribal inheritances.

It's about which bits of land each tribe would get. As they look on the land they've now conquered, which tribe's going to get what. But this endless detail about boundaries and cities isn't just for those who have a penchant for Middle Eastern geography.

[11 : 19] And there's plenty of ink to be spilled on that. These chapters in Joshua are one episode in the unfolding revelation of God's great promises of an enduring inheritance of real estate, of a land.

Right from the very beginning it was God's plan to reach from Eden the ends of the earth. Remember again God's instructions to Adam and Eve back in Genesis.

be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth. As we saw last week the promised land, the land that was promised to Abraham and New Eden and Canaan, a land that is being carved up here in Joshua, that was never the end of it.

Canaan was just a foothold, a starting point from which the ends of the earth would be reached. The goal was always to go further. The goal was always the whole earth.

And with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ we see the beginning of that great and final fulfillment of all those great promises of a land, of an enduring inheritance.

[12 : 33] His sovereign reign over the entire world has already begun. But it will only be complete and total when He returns again.

And then and only then will we receive our inheritance in full. Only then will we enjoy the new creation, the new heavens and the new earth.

And so to lay hold of this promised inheritance, this enduring inheritance is for us today as it was for God's people in Joshua's day, a matter of faith.

And faith can seem a little ethereal, can't it? A little vague. But the Bible is always giving us concrete, solid examples of what real faith looks like.

We've seen that already in Joshua. Back in chapter 2 we saw Rahab, the pagan prostitute who flung herself upon God's grace. And she did that in light of what she had heard about God and what she had sent him do, what he had done for his people.

[13 : 46] She flung herself upon God for his mercy. And here again we have more examples of real faith. One is a positive example, an example to follow.

and the other is a negative example, an example to reject. So firstly then, from chapter 14 verses 6 to 15, we see the faith of Caleb, an example to follow.

Caleb, of the tribe of Judah, was, along with Joshua, the only surviving adult from the wilderness generation. all the rest of that generation, all those who refused to enter the promised land, all that generation had died in the wilderness apart from Joshua and Caleb.

And here's Caleb here in chapter 14 having lived through 40 years of wilderness wanderings. He's lived through four or five or six years of conquest.

promised, and he's ready to claim his inheritance. An inheritance promised many years before. And he comes to Joshua, verse 6, and he says, you know what God promised to me via Moses way back then.

[15 : 05] Now it's time for me to claim that land that was promised. Caleb demonstrates the ideal response of faith to all that God had promised. And we see two aspects in particular here with Caleb.

So firstly, faith is resting on what God has said even when many others don't. Faith is resting on what God has said even when many others don't.

Again and again in this conversation between Caleb and Joshua, we see Caleb leaning on, fully trusting on what God has said in the past. And that is at the very heart, the very foundation of real faith.

Faith is always a response to what God has said in the past, of what he's revealed about himself, about his plans. Faith is always resting on what God has done in history.

The foundation of faith can be nothing else, can it? If the God of the universe, the God who created every star, every planet, the God who created all that we see, the God who sustains your every breath, if he speaks, if he reveals himself, then wouldn't we be foolish not to act on what he said?

[16 : 23] And again and again in this passage, Caleb bases his current action on God's past word. Caleb doesn't base his action on his ideas, it's not based on his feelings, it's not based on the latest trends in evangelical culture, no, faith rests on what God has said.

Just look again at the passage and see second half of verse six, you know what the Lord said. Look on to verse ten, the Lord has kept me alive just as he said these forty-five years since the time that the Lord spoke this word.

Verse twelve, so now give me this hill country of which the Lord spoke on that day. Caleb's whole plea to Joshua is based on what God said.

His request is based only on God's promises. And that was the way of faith for Caleb. And it's the way of faith for God's people today.

That has always been the way of faith. It's based on what God has said. Faith is not some abstract feeling we conjure up in ourselves. Faith isn't the result of determined thinking or the result of some expensive meditation retreat.

[17 : 47] No, faith is simple trust in what God has said, trusting that he will do just as he promises. promises. So you might have felt pretty lousy coming to church this morning, not feeling especially spiritual, not feeling particularly special.

I hope at least one person does here because that would mean there were two of us. How you feel about things, how you feel about your Christian faith, does not matter.

What matters is what God has said. That is the basis of Caleb's appeal, that's the basis of ours, that is always the way of faith. But not only do we see that faith is based on what God has said, faith is the response to what God has revealed about himself.

Not only that, but we also see that the way of faith can be isolating. Caleb's willingness to walk by faith often resulted in him standing alone.

45 years before these events in chapter 14, the 12 spies were sent out into the land of Canaan. He and Joshua alone demonstrated faith in God's promises.

[19 : 01] The other 10 spies, they expressed fear rather than faith. Look at verse 7 where he refers back to this moment. I was 40 years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land.

And I brought him word again as it was in my heart. But my brothers who went up with me, that's the other 10 spies, they made the heart of the people melt.

Yet I wholly followed the Lord my God. Caleb's faith meant a willingness to stand alone, to go against the flow.

And that is the way of faith at all times, then and now. It's hard. to stand alone. It's hard to be the only one in the office who's a Christian.

It's hard to be the only one in your tutorial class that holds to Christian orthodoxy in terms of human sexuality and gender. It's hard to be the parent who doesn't let your child play matches on a Sunday morning.

[20 : 08] It's hard. It's often lonely. it was the way for Caleb and it's often the way of faith for all today. As Dale Ralph Davis puts it, the devotion of faith often leads to the isolation of faith.

The devotion of faith leaning on what God has said that often leads to the isolation of faith. But doesn't seeing Caleb's unflinching loyalty to what God has said here, doesn't that give you courage?

Doesn't seeing him standing alone, trusting what God has said, give you steel? It's often the way, isn't it? You see someone who takes a stand, who's willing to stand alone.

And that encourages us, doesn't it? Gives us courage to do the same. Think about that young couple from Northern Ireland who run that bakery. They were willing to take a stand.

And seeing them do that certainly gives me courage. I'm sure it does for you. And so as you take a stand, as you are willing to stand alone, as Caleb does, that will bring courage to others.

[21 : 20] When they see your example, that will give them courage to live by faith, to rest on what God has said. So faith, that means resting what God has said, even when many other people don't.

It's the first thing we see with Caleb. Secondly, faith confidently expects God to do just as he says, even in the face of fierce-looking enemies. Faith confidently expects God to do just as he says, even in the face of fierce-looking enemies.

Caleb doesn't grudgingly rest on God's promises. He's not reluctant. He expresses great confidence in God's promises. Look what he says there in verse 12.

So now, give me this hill country of which the Lord spoke on that day. For you heard on that day how the Anakim were there with great fortified cities. It may be that the Lord will be with me and I shall drive them out just as the Lord said.

Caleb is not being presumptuous here or cocky. Rather, he says that it may be that the Lord will be with me. Perhaps God will be with me in this.

[22 : 37] And he's not expressing uncertainty or doubt. He knows that God will keep his promises. Caleb's just not 100% sure that he's the one who will do it. Maybe it'll be somebody else that that promise is fulfilled through.

He knows that God acts in certain ways, that he's very likely in this matter to give him great success. But Caleb isn't dictating to God. Rather, he's acting with confidence on the basis of promises made.

And Caleb's is a venturesome faith, isn't it? He's willing to give it a go. It's very un-Scottish, very un-British, isn't it? His is not the cautious, precise, bean-counting faith that only takes action when 100% guarantee of success.

His is not a faith that is paralyzed by uncertainty in exactly what course of action to take. He gets on with it. And God has made great promises to his church today, hasn't he?

He promises to be with us, to never leave nor forsake us. He has given us his spirit. He lives within us. And he does that as we go forth out into the world to proclaim the gospel.

[23 : 53] He promises to be with us as we do that. But he doesn't give us the 10-step strategy to successful church planting in an urban environment. He doesn't do that.

He doesn't flesh out all the minutiae of how we're to go about things. We're just to get on with it and keep the main thing the main thing. Now, of course, we are to use our minds to think, to plan as best as we can.

And who knows? God may bless this particular plan that we have. We may find that some things go well with Calvin Grove or here at Bar Street or on Queens Park on the south side.

Some things may not go so well. But that's okay. We press on. We try something else. I remember when I first started working here, I was greatly encouraged when Willie said to me that if something is worth doing, it's worth doing badly.

Now, he quickly followed it up by saying, don't try and do things badly. But you get the sense of the meaning. If something's worth doing, we don't have to get everything lined up, it doesn't have to be perfect, but we give it a go.

[25 : 00] If something's worth doing, it's worth doing badly. And so we can move on, we can take action, and we can do so confidently knowing that God's big promises will come to pass.

His great promises of the gospel advance across the world, that will happen. We can be sure of that. God's great promises to you of an enduring inheritance in the new creation, that is unstoppable.

God's great promises will come to pass. We can trust him in that. And we can step forward in confident faith, even in the face of tough-looking enemies.

land. The land that Caleb was to go in and take possession of, the inheritance that was to be his, was of all the lands in the promised land, the one that you would have least volunteers to go and take.

This land that Caleb takes, Hebron, it was the land of the Anakim. Let's look at verse 12 there. They were the people that 45 years earlier had turned the resolve of the people of Israel to jelly.

[26 : 08] It was the sons of Anak that the 12, well the 10 spies feared the most. And this is what those spies said back in Numbers. This was their report having been in the land.

They said the land devours its inhabitants and all the people that we saw there are of great height. And there we saw the sons of Anak.

And we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers. It was the sons of Anak that struck fear into those spies. Caleb and Joshua alone amongst the spies didn't see them as a problem.

We can overcome them they said. And 45 years later Caleb's resolve is unmoved. He wants to take the most fearsome territory.

He's up for the battle. It's cracking stuff isn't it? Caleb's in his 80s at this point. I like Caleb. I want to be like him in 50 odd years time.

[27 : 05] Still going for it. 85 years old. And a word to the men here particularly. He's the sort of man to aspire to.

He's fully trusting in God's word. He's giving it a go. Willing to take a lead to try things. If there was a difficult task, Caleb was your man.

man, this was the most difficult task in all of the conquering of the land as they went to claim their inheritance. That land where the Anakim were, that was the toughest of the lot. And Caleb straight in there, he's volunteering for the task.

If there was a difficult task, Caleb was the man. If there's a difficult task in the life of the church, are you the sort of man that the leadership will look to?

Are you the sort of man that they will think of when they're thinking of a man for a difficult task? And Caleb is up for it. Caleb is taking this task on, not because he's summoning up some sort of bravery in himself, he's up for it because he's trusting what God has said.

[28 : 12] That's always the way of faith, isn't it? Trusting obedience to what God has said, even in the face of terrible and fearsome opposition.

trusting obedience. That was the way of the Lord Jesus, wasn't it, in the garden? As the shadow of the cross loomed large, facing that dark moment, he said, yet not what I will, but what you will.

Trusting obedience for his father. That is the way of all who are Christ today. For every Christian who's lived down the ages, the only way to keep going in the face of seemingly terrible opposition, is to trust what God has said.

That's the key question. Will you believe what God has said? Will you trust that he can do what he promises? That is the real question of faith. So it's not a case of conjuring up great courage or trying to be the best and bravest Christian you can be.

No, faith is realizing that we can't do that. But we trust the God who can. The God who has promised to be with us. The God who has promised never to leave nor forsake his people.

[29 : 30] Faith is trusting in that God. Caleb is a model of faith. And the writer sets him against another model at the end of the section.

So more briefly now we'll consider the unbelief of Joseph. So flick over to chapter 17 and the little conversation at the end from verses 14 to 18. We've seen the belief, the faith of Caleb but now the unbelief of Joseph an example to reject.

Three quick points here about the nature of the unbelief of the Joseph tribes. Firstly, fearful unbelief is dissatisfied with God's present provision.

The tribes of Joseph felt the land that they had been allocated wasn't big enough. That was the core of their complaint. Just run your eyes over that conversation. They wanted a bigger land.

This land they were given wasn't big enough. Now if you look on a map, you'll see that the land they allocated is fairly substantial. But that is besides the point.

[30 : 41] This was the land that the Lord had given to them. It was the land that he had allocated to them. It was the land he intended for them. But it wasn't enough for them.

Perhaps they thought they deserved better. They were a tribe with pedigree after all. Their ancestor was the great Joseph, the prime minister in Egypt. They even talk about their numerical strength.

Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance? Although I'm a numerous people since all along the Lord has blessed me. Their attitude is one of presumption, isn't it?

Don't you know who I am? We're important. We're numerous. We deserve more than this. Don't you know who I am, Joshua?

Now that is an attitude that prevails amongst many in the church today, a reliance on pedigree. Don't you know which family I'm from?

[31 : 48] Can't you see how the Lord has blessed me and my family? Look at my wealth, my successful children. I deserve some sort of role of responsibility in the church. I deserve recognition, some sort of grand role, and preferably one where I can make decisions without actually having to carry the can and do something.

Perhaps it's a frustration with your current lot in life. I deserve more than this. Why won't God give me that relationship I want?

Why won't God give me that job promotion? Why won't God make me more popular in school? Doesn't he know who I am?

Perhaps you're frustrated with the roles and responsibilities that you have now in church life, perhaps wishing you could do somebody else's job. Well, that sort of attitude reflects a faulty understanding of who God is.

That sort of attitude reflects a distrust of the nature of God, which is staggering really, isn't it? To doubt the plans and the provisions of the sovereign, all-powerful God of the universe.

[33 : 01] He sees everything, everything, and we don't. He knows everything, and we don't. His purposes are inscrutable to us, and so in light of those realities, we are to trust him, to gladly accept his provision.

Even if we think we deserve more, his lot is sufficient. Fearful unbelief often manifests itself in dissatisfaction with God's present provision.

The tribes of Joshua, that's exactly what it was. They were dissatisfied with God's present provision. But Joshua has a solution for them, and this is our second point.

Fearful unbelief refuses to knuckle down to the seemingly menial tasks God has given to us. Joshua assures them that the land is adequate.

It's God's sovereign plan to give it to them. They just need to go and clear some more trees. Look at what Joshua says there in verse 15. If you are a numerous people, as you say you are, go up by yourselves to the forest, and there clear some land for yourselves.

[34 : 18] But the Joseph tribes don't like that very much. They kick that idea into the long grass. And the reasons they give are these. The land isn't big enough, and also they're afraid of the Canaanites.

And we'll come to that in a moment. But Joshua presents a straightforward solution to the problem presented. Forest clearing. Better go and cut down some trees. But his idea is met with a blunt refusal to undertake a menial task.

We're above tree clearing. Just give us a nice big pot of land and we can walk straight into and live in. We deserve that. Don't make us go and cut down trees. It's a warning, isn't it, to us?

Sometimes the work in front of us, the work allotted to us at this time, is rather menial. Maybe it's frustrating. We'd rather be doing something more glamorous.

Maybe the ministry that you're involved with at the moment, the ministry that you're up to your neck in, is just relentless. It's hard work. It's not particularly exciting.

[35 : 27] Maybe you look longingly over the garden fence to the lush green grass of Release the Word, but you don't realize that the grass is just as hard to cut on that side of the fence.

It's just as hard to cut as yours. Ministry, it's never easy. It's jolly hard work. Maybe you've been given a particular area of ministry to work in, but it's not the one you wanted.

Well, there needs to be a level of trust, doesn't there, in the leader who has given you that task, trusting that they see the bigger picture, trusting that they see the needs of the church family better than you do, and that they've got a better grasp of your skills, your abilities, and that actually this job needs doing now.

That's where the emphasis must be. So if for whatever reason, you might be needed in another ministry or another location, are you willing to do that?

Are you willingly up for doing what seems to be a menial task when you'd rather do something else? That may well mean that for some folk, it may mean serving at another location.

[36 : 35] It might mean serving at Queen's Park rather than Central. It might mean moving from Calvin Grove to here for a while to help in a particular ministry. It might mean being a table leader on life explored for a term rather than leading and release the word.

It might mean getting stuck in on a cleaning rotor. There's an opportunity in there Tuesday week to roll up the sleeves for a menial task. Fearful unbelief refuses to knuckle down to the seemingly menial tasks God has given to us.

there was a task for those tribes to do. It was menial. It was forest clearing. But their fearful unbelief they refused to do it. Final points as we think about these Joseph tribes.

Fearful unbelief lives by sight. the Joseph tribe saw the Canaanites and they were afraid.

They saw their chariots and they quaked in their boots. And it's what we see that often scares us isn't it? It's what I see that scares me.

[37 : 53] I'm sure that you're the same. What we see around us causes us to question to doubt. It scares us. But remember who God is.

Remember who God is. And once you see him, once you see the God of the entire universe, the Canaanite chariots suddenly lose their dread. You see, the Joseph tribes never in this conversation referred to God's promises.

Caleb couldn't stop talking about what God had said. Sure, he saw the Anakim, but more importantly, he listened. to what God had said. And that put what he saw into perspective.

Not so with the Joseph tribes. What they saw made them afraid, and it led them to distrust what God had said. So from a human point of view, both Caleb and the Joseph tribes saw the same thing.

They saw enemies that needed to be defeated. They saw the same thing, but to one, the response was fear, but for the other, it was faith. And that is the way of faith at all times, isn't it?

[39 : 07] Faith is living by the invisible. It's living by what God has said. We can't see it. And what we do see scares us. So don't live by sight.

faith. The way of faith is always living by what God has said. And there's always going to be great temptation to live by sight, to look around, to base your present circumstances and to base your understanding of God and the Christian life on those things and what you can see.

But that will only lead to disaster. Christian people must always live by faith, live on the base of what God has said, what he's revealed, what he's done. To live by sight, that leads to fear.

To live by sight, well that leads to exhaustion in church life because we forget that God is at work. To live by sight leads to compromise because we work towards our own comfort.

Our horizons are limited to what we can see rather than the enduring inheritance that God has promised. God has made astonishing promises, hasn't he? an enduring inheritance and a new creation.

[40 : 21] That is our horizon. Not what we can see now, but what God has promised, what he has said. So will you heed the warning that the writer intends by including this short conversation here between the Joseph tribes and Joshua?

Will you heed the warning? These two conversations between Caleb and Joseph, these conversations are recorded so that we might follow in the footsteps of God's faithful servant.

We might follow in the steps of Caleb, a man of faith, a man who based his current action on what God had said. He lived by adventuresome faith, didn't he?

To trust that God's great, and they are great, to trust his great promises. That is the way of faith. leaning on what God has said in history, to lean on what he has said and revealed fully and finally in the Lord Jesus Christ.

That is what we look back on. We look back on greater promises than Caleb did. We look back on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which has begun that great fulfillment and will one day be finished, complete, when he returns.

[41 : 37] That is what we await. So will you live by faith? Will you be a people that walk in light of what God has revealed and said? That is the only way that you and I can lay hold of God's enduring inheritance.

Amen.