

Beware Unbelief

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[0 : 00] Good. Well, we're now going to turn to our Bible reading. And we're picking up again in Joshua. Do grab a Bible if you don't have one. We do have some spread around for visitors. Do grab a Bible and follow along.

And we're going to be reading not the whole of chapters 14 to 17, as on the screen, but a guided reading through these various chapters that have lots of detail about how the land was going to be carved up. So we're going to begin reading from Joshua chapter 14.

And we'll pick up from verse 6. And I'll keep you right as we go along and jump from place to place. So Joshua chapter 14, beginning at verse 6. If you are using a visitor's Bible, page 189.

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 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 made the heart of the people melt.

[1 : 30] Yet I wholly followed the Lord my God. And Moses swore on that day, saying, Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.

And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, just as he said, these 45 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 85 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 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. Then Joshua blessed him and gave Hebron to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, for an inheritance.

[2 : 36] 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.

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.

We have more details throughout chapter 15 of the different boundaries. We'll skip on ahead to verse 13 of chapter 15 and pick up.

We'll skip on to verse 20.

This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Judah, according to their clans. And on to verse 63. But the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the people of Judah, could not drive out.

[4 : 09] So the Jebusites dwell with the people of Judah at Jerusalem to this day. The allotment of the people of Judah 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.

Let's skip along to the end of chapter 16 at verse 10. However, they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer. So the Canaanites have lived in the midst of Ephraim to this day, but have been made to do forced labor.

Then allotment was made to the people of Manasseh, for he was the firstborn of Joseph. And then skip on to verse 12 of chapter 17.

And we'll read to the end of the chapter. 17, 12. Yet the people of Manasseh could not take possession of those cities, but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. Now, when the people of Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out. Then the people of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as inheritance, although I'm a numerous people, since all along the Lord has blessed me?

[5 : 37] 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 Joseph said, The hill country is not enough for us. Yet all the Canaanites who dwell in 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 to its farthest borders, for you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong.

Well, amen. This is God's word. Well, good evening. Please do have those chaps in Joshua open in front of you.

That would be really helpful. I managed to spill water down my top as I was drinking from the glass there. Don't ignore the watermark on my shirt.

[7 : 02] It's good to be humbled, isn't it? Still learn to drink age 41. Anyway. Please have these chapters open in front of you. And I think we've got a bit of a map to show.

It's quite hard to get a good map of... No, that's not the map. There we go. So that's a slightly zoomed-in map of the promised land.

And you'll see in the north part of that, you've got the Sea of Galilee. And in the southern part, you can see the beginnings of the Dead Sea. And on the east were the tribal allocations that we saw previously and a few weeks ago.

But now we are on the west side of the River Jordan. And we're beginning to see how the land's being carved up here in these chapters. And we're focusing on three tribes in particular this evening.

You see Judah in the south. That's just a fraction of the land of Judah. It extends further south. And then slightly to the north, we've got Ephraim and then Manasseh. So those are the three tribes we're looking at this evening.

[8 : 05] Helpful to have a wee map. We'll keep it up for a second, and then you can take it down. And I'll show it again a bit later. But that's where we're dealing with. And I think it's helpful just to see it laid out there. Now we're taking a big chunk this evening, these chapters 14, 15, 16, 17.

And these detail the inheritances of, as I've mentioned, three of the tribes, Judah and the two tribes of Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh. And we're going to be focusing on two conversations that take place in this big section.

One at the start, that was read to us in chapter 14, and then one conversation at the end. One at the start takes place between Joshua and Caleb.

And the conversation at the end is between Joshua and the tribes of Joseph. One of those conversations is an example of faith.

The other is an example of unbelief. One is an example to follow. The other is an example to reject. Two conversations, but two very different attitudes to God's promised inheritance.

[9 : 17] And this whole middle section, as we've seen, is all about these tribal inheritances. It's about which bits of land each tribe is going to receive as its inheritance.

But this endless detail, which you read here, we kind of skimmed over it, but it details the precise boundary lines, the cities that would come to each tribe. It's not just for those who love maps. There's plenty of ink spilled on Middle Eastern geography. But these chapters in Joshua, they are one part of the unfolding revelation of God's great promises of an inheritance, of real estate. Right from the very beginning, we saw this last time, right from the very beginning, God's plan was to reach from Eden to the very ends of the earth. Remember God's instructions to Adam and to Eve, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, not just Eden, but to extend Eden. Canaan was just a foothold, a starting point, from which the ends of the earth could be reached. And with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, we see the beginning of the fulfillment of all those

great promises of a land, of an enduring inheritance.

[10:32] His sovereign reign over the world has already begun. And it will only be complete and total when the Lord Jesus returns again, when he establishes his reign forever.

And then, only then, will we receive our inheritance in its fullest form. And to lay hold of that promise of inheritance today, right now, as it was for Joshua's people back then, to lay hold of it is a matter of faith.

And faith can seem a little ethereal at times, can't it? It's hard to sort of grab hold of it. But the Bible is always giving us concrete examples of what faith looks like.

We get real examples of what it means. We've seen that in Joshua already, haven't we? Think back to chapter 2, Rahab, the pagan prostitute who flung herself upon God's grace in light of what she'd heard about him.

She sought her refuge in him. She found salvation. And here again, we have more examples of what real faith looks like.

[11:44] One is a positive example, the other a negative. And we need to heed both because there is a growing sense of uneasiness as we read through these chapters.

The little hints, little signs of not quite complete obedience to the Lord. And that will, over time, prove to be a huge thorn in the flesh for God's people.

We'll see that as we go through. But first, we're going to look at Caleb. The faith of Caleb. So this is chapter 14 and verses 6 to 15.

The faith of Caleb. Now, Caleb of the tribe of Judah was, along with Joshua, the only surviving adult from the wilderness generation.

All the rest of that entire generation, all those who refused to enter the land 40 years before, all that generation had died in the wilderness. But here's Caleb.

[12:49] having lived through 40 years of wilderness wanderings and a further seven years of the conquest. That's what the time period's been in chapters 1 to 12 of Joshua.

Seven years. And here he is, all these years later, ready to claim his inheritance. An inheritance promised many, many years before. And he comes here to Joshua, verse 6.

And he basically says to him, look, you know what the Lord said to Moses all those years ago. Now it's time for me to claim that promise, to claim the land that was promised to me. And Caleb demonstrates here the ideal response of faith to all that God had promised.

And there are two aspects in particular to draw attention to. So here's the first aspect of faith, what it looks like. Faith is resting on what God has said, even when many others don't.

And we're looking particularly here at verse 8. Faith is resting on what God has said, even when many others don't. Again and again, through this section, we see Caleb leaning on, fully trusting what God has said in the past.

[14:03] And that is at the very heart of real faith. Faith. Faith is always the response to what God has said, of what he's revealed about himself, about his plans.

The foundation of faith can be nothing else, can it? If the God of the universe, the God who created every star and planet, the God who created all that we see, who sustained us every waking moment, if he speaks, then we'd be foolish not to act on what he said.

Again and again in this passage, Caleb bases current action on God's past word. Not his own ideas, not his feelings, not the latest trends in evangelical culture.

No, his faith rests on what God has said. Just look again at the passage. Second half of verse 6, he says this, you know what the Lord said.

Look at verse 10. The Lord has kept me alive just as he said these 45 years since the time that the Lord spoke this word.

[15:15] And then verse 12. So now, give me this hill country of which the Lord spoke on that day. Caleb's whole plea is based on what God has said.

His request is based only on God's promises. And that was the way of faith for Caleb. And that's the way of faith for God's people in every age, isn't it?

That has always been the way of faith. 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.

No, faith is simple trust in what God has said. It's trusting that he will do just as he's promised. So, you might well have felt pretty lousy coming to church today, not feeling especially spiritual or

special.

I hope at least one of you does because that would mean there would be two of us in the room. It doesn't matter how you feel about things. What matters is what God has said.

[16:25] That is the basis, isn't it, of Caleb's appeal here. And it's the basis of our appeal as we come to the Lord. It's what he said. That's what we base everything on. 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. Think back 45 years from this moment. The 12 spies who went to spy out the land.

of that 12, only Caleb and Joshua demonstrated faith in God's promise. The other 10 spies expressed fear rather than faith.

Look at verse 7 here. He's reflecting back on that 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 to him word again as it was in my heart. But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt. Yet I wholly followed the Lord my God. See, Caleb's faith meant a willingness to stand alone, to go against the flow, to go against the rest of the spies, he and Joshua alone.

[17:48] And that is often the way of faith, isn't it? Then and now. It's hard to stand alone. It's hard to stand out. 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 the realms of, well, you name it, sexuality, gender. It's hard to be the parent.

He doesn't let your children play matches on a Sunday morning. It's hard, isn't it? You can often feel a bit lonely. You feel ostracized. Well, it was the way for Caleb.

And it's often the way of faith for many today. So if you find yourself alone, feeling isolated, well, you're in good company. You're standing with Caleb.

Delrath Davis in his commentary put it this way. The devotion of faith often leads to the isolation of faith. Those two often will go together.

[18:53] And doesn't seeing Caleb's unflinching loyalty to God to trust what he said and all that means in terms of standing alone, that can bring courage to us, can't it? Seeing Caleb doing that and seeing others doing that, seeing others around you being willing to stand alone, and that brings real courage, doesn't it?

If they can do it, well, I can too. And as you take that stand yourself, you'll give courage to others in the church family, those younger than you, those older than you.

They'll see your stand and it'll encourage them to take the same when the moment comes. So here we see an aspect of what faith is. Faith means resting on what God has said, even when many other people don't.

That's the first aspect. It's the aspect two that we see with Caleb. Faith confidently expects God to do just as he says, even in the face of fierce-looking enemies. Look at verse 12.

So now give me this hill country where 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.

[20:12] Caleb doesn't merely rest on God's promises reluctantly, grudgingly. He expresses great confidence, doesn't he, in what God has promised. He's not naive about the opposition.

He's not naive about the Anakim. They struck fear into the hearts of people before. Caleb isn't being presumptive or cocky either. rather he says it may be that the Lord will be with me.

Perhaps God will help me. He's not expressing uncertainty or doubt but he knows that God will keep his promises. He's just not totally sure how he's going to do it. He's not sure that he's the guy to do it.

It might be someone else but he's trusting the Lord. He knows that God acts in certain ways and it's very likely that in this matter the Lord will give him success. Caleb isn't dictating to God.

But rather he's acting in confidence based on what God has said in the past. Caleb is he's up for isn't he? He's got a venturesome sort of faith.

[21:17] He's willing to give it a go. Quite sort of un-Scottish un-British. He reminds me of Americans. They just love to give things a go. Whenever I go over there to see family it's just you come back with a sort of entrepreneurial spirit.

but it dissipates very quickly. But he's got that sort of spirit about him hasn't he? He's not the cautious and precise bean counting faith type that only takes action when 100% success is guaranteed.

he's not a faith that is paralyzed by uncertainty in exactly what sort of course to take. No, he looks at it and he says God's promised I'm going to give this a go.

And God has made great promises to us today hasn't he as his church? He promises to be with us by his spirit as we go forth into the world and tell of the gospel.

We heard this this morning didn't we? The great commission he sets our tasks and he promises to be with us to the very end of the age. And so we can get about that task of making and growing disciples.

[22 : 28] We can do it with confidence. We can step forward in confident faith even in the face of tough looking enemies. The land that Caleb was going to take possession of, the inheritance that was to be his, was of all the lands in the promised land, it was the one you would have had least volunteers for.

The Anakim were there. They were the people that 45 years earlier had turned the resolve of Israel to jelly. Listen to what the spies, the ten spies, who said let's not go, here's what they said.

the land devours its inhabitants and all the people that saw it are of great height and there we saw the sons of Anak and we seem to ourselves like grasshoppers.

Caleb and Joshua alone amongst the spies didn't see them as a problem. We can overcome them, they said. And 45 years later, 45 years later, in his mid-80s, Caleb's resolve is unmoved.

He wants to take the most fearsome territory. He's up for the battle. It's crazy, isn't it? Caleb's in his 80s at this point. He's the sort of man to aspire to, isn't he?

[23 : 54] Giving it a go, willing to try things, take a lead, there's a difficult task, Caleb's the man.

The land of the anarchy, Mark, Caleb's the man. If there's a difficult task in the life of the church, are you the sort of man the church is going to turn to for leadership?

This is a task for you. And Caleb's up for it because he's trusting what God has said. And that's always the way. Trusting obedience to what God has said, even in the face of terrible and fearsome opposition.

And that was the way of the Lord Jesus, wasn't it, in the garden? Facing his darkest moment, Jesus said, yet not what I will, but what you will.

It's the way for all of those who are Christ's. For every Christian who has lived down through the ages, the only way to keep going in the face of seemingly terrible opposition is to trust what God has said.

Will you believe what God has said? That's the question of faith, isn't it? It's not a case of trying to conjure up great courage. It's not trying to be the best and bravest Christian you can be.

[25 : 09] No, faith is realizing we can't do it, but we trust the God who can, the God who has promised to be with us, who will never leave or forsake us. Caleb is, on the whole, a model of what faith looks like.

And the writer sets him against another model we'll see in a few moments at the other end of the section. But even with Caleb and even with the tribe of Judah, which he's part of, even here there's an indication that all isn't quite as rose as we like to think.

Even with them there's a warning. Notice, again, the very final verse of chapter 15. this comes at the end of a very long list of cities and boundary markets.

And it's one of these verses you may never get to read because you sort of give up around verse 42. But if you keep on reading and get to verse 63, there's a bit of a shock at the end.

Look what it says. But the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the people of Judah, could not drive out. so the Jebusites dwell with the people of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

[26 : 30] They couldn't drive them out. The inference is, I think, they certainly tried. It's a failure of endeavor rather than a failure of obedience.

But it's just a little chink in the armor. They've managed to drive out every other people. But here, the Jebusites, they couldn't manage it.

And by the time we get to the next tribes, Joseph, the Ephraim and Manasseh tribes, this note of warning grows. Look at the end of chapter 16. However, verse 16, verse 10, however, they did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Giza.

So the Canaanites have lived in the midst of Ephraim to this day, but have been made to do forced labor. So there's a slight shift there, isn't it? With Judah, they could not drive them out. And here, with the Canaanites, they did not drive them out. And then look on to the end of chapter 17. Well, not end of chapter 17, but verse 12 of chapter 17.

[27 : 40] This is the tribe of Manasseh now. Yet the people of Manasseh could not take possession of those cities. Notice plural. It's not just one little corner.

Now this is a whole bunch of cities, plural. They could not take possession of those cities, but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. Now when the people of Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

even when they were strong, when they were capable of pushing them out, they didn't. They put them to forced labor. It seems financial gain was more important than complete obedience.

Now these seem like almost throw away comments, don't they, come to the end of these long chapters, but the disobedience here compounds, it grows. and the next book in our Bibles, Judges, shows how this epidemic has spread to all the tribes, one after another.

They all fail to drive out the people. And those seeds, small as they might seem, they yield a bitter harvest in the generations to come.

[28 : 53] Compromise here would eventually lead to exile. And it's so key then that we pay attention to the negative example presented to us here at the end of chapter 17.

We get something of an insight to what lay at the root of this fatal disobedience. And it's a warning that we do well to heed. You see, seemingly small compromises can, over time, compound and lead to spiritual ruin.

A failure just to drive out those Jebusites it just grew. And it grew. And each tribe, when they saw that happening, well, they became less lack, they became easier on it.

You see, sitting light to God's commands, if we don't pay attention to it, they will, over time, take us in a direction we don't want to go in. Let me give you an example.

Sitting light to the command to not give up meeting regularly together with the Lord's people, if you set light to that, in the end, it could lead to disaster. And taking that seriously here amongst our church family, taking that command seriously would look like, usually, being at church, morning and evening, and during the midweek, growth groups, prayer meeting.

[30 : 24] But say that you opt out of the 5pm service once or twice a month. You start doing that now and again. Six months down the line, well, that looks like missing the morning service once a month for brunch with friends or the kids at the sports club.

You keep that trend going, you let that compound over time, and five years down the line your children find church unusual, because they're never there. Seems like a small thing at the beginning, but you allow that to go unchecked.

Spiritual ruin, certainly for your children and certainly for your grandchildren. And the issues here in Joshua, that might seem small, those little one-off verses, but they are pretty fatal, and I think we do well to heed the warning that is implicit here.

We do well to learn from the positive example of Caleb, but also the negative one we're given here at the end of chapter 17. We've got the positive example of Caleb, but now we've got the negative of Joseph, the tribes of Joseph, and this is an example to reject.

So we're looking here now in chapter 17 verses 14 to 18. This is the second conversation that Joshua has. And we're drilling in on these because amongst all the lists and all the details, these are the two conversations that are reported in these passages.

[31 : 53] That's why we're paying attention to it. It's standing out to us, these conversations. So three points about the nature of the unbelief of the Joseph tribes here at the end of chapter 17.

Number one, verse 14, fearful unbelief is dissatisfied with God's present provision. The tribes of Joseph felt the land allocated wasn't big enough.

Can we have the map again for a second? that was the core of their complaint. Look at what it says, verse 14. Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance?

Though I'm a numerous people, since all along the Lord has blessed me. Now, the two tribes of Joseph are Ephraim and Manasseh. So Ephraim in the blue there, just above Dan and Benjamin, and Manasseh above it.

Now you look at that, that's quite a chunky bit of land relative to others. And yet their complaint is, it's not enough. This was the land allotted to them by the Lord ultimately.

[32 : 58] It was the land the Lord intended for them, but it wasn't enough for them. Perhaps they thought they deserved better. Well, they did. Look what they said. We're a numerous people since all along the Lord has blessed me.

They thought they were a tribe with pedigree. Their ancestor was the prime minister in Egypt. They even mentioned their numerical strength. It's an attitude, isn't it, of presumption.

Don't you know who I am? We're the tribe of Joseph. We're important. We're numerous. We deserve more than this. And I wonder if there's an attitude that prevails among some in the church today like that.

Our alliance on pedigree. Don't you know what family I'm from? Can't you see how he's blessed me and my family? Look at my wealth, my successful children.

I deserve some sort of recognition in the church, some sort of ground role, preferably one where I can make decisions but bear no responsibility for the outcomes. Perhaps it's frustration with your current lot in life.

[34 : 11] I deserve more than this. Why won't the Lord give me this or that? Well, that sort of attitude, it reveals, doesn't it, a faulty understanding of who God is.

It reveals a distrust of him, which is staggering, isn't it, really? To doubt the plans and the provisions of the sovereign Lord of all the universe.

He sees everything and we don't. He knows everything and we don't. His purposes are inscrutable to us. And so we are not to question him but to trust him, to gladly accept his provision, not to think that we know better, not to be like Manasseh and Ephraim, thinking we deserve better than this. You see, fearful unbelief like this often presents with a dissatisfaction with our current lot in life, with God's present provision. But Joshua had a solution for them.

And this is our second point under this heading. Verse 16, fearful unbelief refuses to knuckle down to the seemingly menial tasks that God has given to us.

[35 : 35] See, 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 trees. Look at what Joshua suggests there in verse 15.

Well, if you are numerous people, go up by yourselves to the forest and clear some land for yourselves. It's a very obvious solution, isn't it? Pull your finger out.

Get to work. But the Joshua tribes kicked that idea into the long grass. And the reason given is that the land isn't big enough and also they're afraid of the Canaanites, which we'll come to in a moment.

But Joshua presents a straightforward solution, a bit of forest clearing. But his idea is met with a refusal to undertake such a menial task. We're above tree clearing.

Just give us a nice big pond of land that's ready for us to walk into and live in. That's a warning to us, isn't it? Sometimes the work in front of us, sometimes the lot apportioned to us, it is rather menial.

[36 : 40] We'd rather be doing something more glamorous. Maybe the ministry you're up to your neck in, in the life of the church, maybe it's relentless, hard going, and you look longingly at the greener grass of release the word, not perhaps realizing that the grass there is just the same as yours actually, and it's just as hard to cut.

But maybe you've been given a particular area of ministry, and it's not the one that you wanted. Whatever is going on in the life of church has meant you have to be moved to a different team, different ministry, because the need is greatest there.

It can be hard, can't it, to feel we're out of our place, or wanting to use our gifts elsewhere, but are we willing to get down and get our hands dirty with the work in front of us that the Lord has given us now?

And that was the problem here. The people of Joseph refused. to get on with that menial task of cleaning the forests away. Fearful unbelief refuses to knuckle down to the menial task God has given us.

And the third and final aspect of the nature of the Joseph tribes here is that fearful unbelief lives by sight. Fearful unbelief lives by sight.

[38 : 04] The Joseph tribe saw the Canaanites and they were afraid. They saw their chariots and they quaked in their boots. Look at verse 16.

The people of Joseph said, the hill country is not enough for us, yet all the Canaanites who dwelled on the plain have chariots of fire, both those in Beth Shein and its villages and those in the valley of

Jezreel. That was their big concern.

Look at their chariots. And what we see, it often scares us, doesn't it? But remember who God is. And once you see him, the Canaanite chariots suddenly lose their dread. The Joseph tribes nowhere in their conversation refer to God's promises. Caleb couldn't stop talking about God's promises, could he?

But nowhere here do they ever mention what God has promised. They had taken their eyes off the promises of God and put their eyes on the enemy, on the Canaanites. Caleb, he did see the Anakim, but he remembered what God had said about them.

[39 : 11] And what God said put what he saw into perspective. Not so were the Joseph tribes. What they saw made them afraid. And it led them to distrust what God had said.

See, from a human perspective, both Caleb and Joshua saw the same thing. But to one, the response was fear. The other, faith.

faith. And that is the way of faith at all times. There is always going to be that great temptation to live by sight, to look around you, your present circumstances, to base your understanding of God and what's for you in the Christian life on those things, the things you see.

But that will only lead to disaster. Christian people must always live by faith. We must always live on the base of what God has said.

to live by sight leads to fear. To live by sight leads to exhaustion in church life because we forget that God's at work.

[40 : 15] We think it's all down to us. To live by sight leads to compromise because we work towards our own comfort, because our horizon is limited to what we can see rather than the enduring inheritance that God has promised.

So we are meant to heed the warning here. The writer intends us to hear the warning with these two short conversations between Joshua and the tribes.

And these two conversations are recorded so that we might follow in the footsteps of God's faithful servant, to follow in the steps of Caleb, to live by faith, to live by adventuresome faith, to trust God's great, and they are great promises as we go about our task of proclaiming the gospel to the ends of the earth.

To live by faith, that is the only way that we are going to lay hold of God's enduring inheritance. So friends, heed the warning. Do not live by sight, but live by faith.

Let me pray, and then we'll sing together to close. Amen. Amen. Amen. Our Father in heaven, you know how tempted we are to live by what we see, to let those things scare us and make us feel cowardly.

[41 : 54] But Lord, would we be a people that are always brought back to what you have said? Make us a people of your word, a people who trust what you have said.

And so please would you help us be a people that live by faith, not by sight, and how we need your help. So please would you, by your Spirit, enable us, all of us, individually as a church, to be full of ventures and faith that that would bring you great glory.

Help us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.