

April 2, 2023

Follow the Lord Fully

by Bubba Garner

My favorite lesson to put together is the kind that traces the story of a Bible character. Especially when the Scriptures use a phrase that is unique to that particular person. For instance, Abraham is the only person in the Bible who is called “the friend of God.” David, and only David, is referred to as a “man after God’s own heart.” These descriptions are meant to motivate us to identify the characteristics that are pleasing to God and then put them to use in our own lives as His people.

Caleb, who at times is overshadowed by his fellow spy, Joshua, is said to have “followed the Lord fully.” Six times this description is assigned to him (Num. 14:24, 32:12; Deut. 1:36; Josh. 14:8,9,14). The very first time was when the 12 spies returned from viewing the land of Canaan. Ten men said that the cities were too secure, the people were too big, and the task was too overwhelming. Two spies viewed the situation from a higher perspective.

Caleb indeed “followed the Lord fully.” What does that phrase mean? And how can we do the same as we make our way to the land sworn to the faithful?

By displaying a different spirit. That’s what God recognized about his servant (Num. 14:24). Caleb was outnumbered five-to-one when he spoke out against the other spies. But still he stood up and reminded the nation that if the Lord was

with them, the other side would be their prey. And when “all the congregation said to stone them with stones” (Num. 14:10), he did not change his story. He displayed a different spirit, even when it was unpopular to do so.

You may have to be the person who takes a stand at the office or in the classroom for sure. But you may also have to do so in your own home and say, “We shouldn’t be watching this” or “We shouldn’t be talking about that.” You may have to display a different spirit in this church and say, “This isn’t right” or “We don’t have authority for that.” It’s how you follow the Lord fully.

By taking God at His word. “Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun” (Num. 14:30). Because of their lack of faith, the Israelites were made to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, one year for every day they spied out the land. We learn at the beginning of Numbers that the men of Israel, 20 years old and up, were 603,500 strong (1:45; 2:32). Over the next 40 years, all but two of these men would die. On average, that’s 15,000 deaths per year or 40 funerals a day. Yet Caleb kept his faith in God that he would see the promised land. At the end of the wandering, he said to Joshua, “You know the word which the Lord spoke to

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Our Gospel Meeting with Bubba Garner - April 2-5

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh-barnea” (Josh. 14:6). Forty years had not diminished his faith in the promise of God.

How long are you prepared to wait on the Lord? When you think you're all alone and that no one cares or understands what you're going through, remember Heb. 13:5: “for He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you, nor will I ever forsake you.’” When you feel like you can't fight one more battle or start to wonder whether it's worth it anymore, read 1 John 2:25: “This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.” God said it. Follow Him fully and believe His word.

By finishing what you started. Caleb did not fade into the sunset. At 85 years old, he was not looking for a place in Canaan to retire and grow a garden. He was ready for war, to do what God intended for them 45 years earlier (Josh. 14:10-12). And he drove out the sons of Anakim, the very people the original spies said they could not defeat (Josh. 15:4). Following the Lord fully means following Him all the way through.

It is important to get started. It is just as essential to bring your work to its completion. We are still at war. We are still surrounded by worldliness that must be driven out. We cannot reach the point where we are satisfied with where we are. The crown of life is reserved for those who have “finished the course” (2 Tim. 4:6-8). Don't just follow where He leads. Follow all the way.

The descendants of Caleb were later called “Calebites” (1 Sam. 25:3). Wouldn't you like to be known as a follower of the man who followed the Lord fully? To do so is to march closer to our eternal rest.

Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing treatments to strengthen his immune system. He is having some tests run for his lungs.

Dinah Williams continues to have mobility issues and will be having cataracts removed soon.

Don Simmons is still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

Randall Vanaman is having difficulties with his feet and has a procedure scheduled for April 21.

Doug Adair is preparing to have surgery on his back (waiting for it to be rescheduled)

Lisa Mullen (Darrell's sister) is under treatment for cervical cancer that has spread.

Audria Trammel is having some weakness and is unsure of the cause.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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