

# WHAT IT MEANS TO FOLLOW THE LORD FULLY

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**TEXT: Numbers 14:24**

## INTRODUCTION

1. A familiar story in the Bible is that of the twelve spies of Israel. It is found in **Numbers 13 & 14**.
  - a. Sent to spy out the land of Canaan.
  - b. Spending 40 days traversing the land.
  - c. Bringing back both good news and bad news.
    - 1) A land of milk and honey, as evidenced by the fruit.
    - 2) A land occupied by strong people and giants.
  - d. Caleb being one of the spies sought to reassure the people.
  - e. Yet ten of the spies overwhelmed the people with their bad report.
  - f. Only Joshua and Caleb had confidence in the Lord.
  - g. But the people heeded the bad report, resulting in God's condemnation.
    - 1) Israel was to spend 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.
    - 2) The ten spies died by a plague before the Lord.
    - 3) Only Joshua and Caleb were spared .
2. The Lord spared Caleb because he followed the Lord fully.

## I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FOLLOW THE LORD FULLY

- A. Like Caleb it means to follow the lord in the good times and the bad.
- B. It means to follow Him in the wilderness.
- C. Caleb was still following the Lord in the land of Canaan 45 years later - **Joshua 14:8-10**.
- D. Many are like Lot's wife, they turn back - **Genesis 19:26**.
- E. Many are like the Galatians, they are easily bewitched - **Galatians 3:1**.
- F. Like Caleb we are to follow the Lord in our youth as well as our old age.
- G. Caleb followed the Lord "fully", "wholly".
  1. That is, with his whole heart.
  2. He was the perfect role model.
- H. Sadly, many try to serve the Lord with divided hearts.
  1. Like Solomon, who was influenced by his foreign wives - **1 Kings 11:4**.
  2. Like those in James' epistle, seeking to be friends with the world - **James 4:4**.
- I. Caleb followed the Lord despite the influences and despite the dangers.
  1. He was willing to face the giants in the land - **Numbers 13:33**.
  2. He was willing to face the wrath of his brethren - **Numbers 14:10**.
  3. He was willing to take a mountain from the giants in his old age - **Joshua 14:10-12**.
- J. Many will serve the Lord only when it is convenient or popular.
- K. Certainly the commitment of Caleb to his Lord is commendable. But how was he able to be so committed? How might we be so enabled?

## II. HOW ARE WE ENABLED TO FOLLOW THE LORD FULLY

- A. By Keeping our eyes on Him.
  - 1. Caleb's faith was in the Lord, not himself.
  - 2. He was confident they could take the land - **Numbers 13:30**.
  - 3. He knew the Lord would be with them - **Numbers 14:6-9**.
  - 4. His eye was on the Lord!
  - 5. We need to keep our eye on Jesus - **Hebrews 12:1-4**.
- B. By Having a different spirit.
  - 1. Caleb was noted for a having a different spirit - **Numbers 14:24**.
    - a. Different than the spirit in the other ten spies, who were defeatists.
    - b. Different than the spirit in the rest of Israel, who complained.
  - 2. Caleb had another spirit; not only a bold, generous, and heroic spirit, but the Spirit and influence of God.
  - 3. This is the spirit we are to have.

## III. WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF FOLLOWING THE LORD FULLY

- A. It leads to a useful life.
  - 1. Consider how God was able to use Caleb:
    - a. As a leader in Israel - **Numbers 13:2,6; 34:18,19**
    - b. As a servant of God, first to spy out the land, then to divide it.
    - c. As an example of faith and courage - **Numbers 13:30; 14:8,9**.
    - d. As a reminder of God's justice - **Numbers 14:29-30**.
    - e. As an inspiration of service, even in old age - **Joshua 14:6-12**.
  - 2. This is how useful we will be, if we follow Jesus fully?
- B. It leads to a fulfilled life.
  - 1. Consider how Caleb was fulfilled in life:
    - a. Only he and Joshua were blessed to enter Canaan - **Deuteronomy 1:35-36**.
    - b. He received the land around Hebron as an inheritance – **Joshua 14:6-14; 21:12**.
    - c. His land had rest from war - **Joshua 14:15**.
  - 2. What kind of fulfilled life does Jesus offer those who follow Him fully today?
    - a. One that experiences love which passes knowledge.
    - b. One that experiences peace which surpasses understanding.
    - c. One that experiences joy inexpressible.
    - d. One in which our daily needs are provided.

## CONCLUSION

- 1. Let the example of Caleb inspire you to follow the Lord fully in your life.
  - a. To follow Jesus all the days of your life.
  - b. To follow Jesus with all your heart.
  - c. To follow Jesus despite the hazards.