

# unsung HEROES

Part # 2:

## Caleb: Sustaining Faith

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An unsung hero defined is, "a person who makes a substantive yet **unrecognized** or unacknowledged contribution to a cause."

The Bible is filled with many heroic figures whose stories of extraordinary courage **inspire** us.

However there are many people in the Bible who are often **overlooked**, but have played an **extraordinary** role in the life of the church.

God provides us with unsung heroes to inspire us to allow Him the **opportunity** to do seemingly impossible things **through** our lives.

## Central Point...

### Heroic Faith

Under the leadership of Moses and Joshua, the Hebrew people went from slavery in Egypt to possessing the land that God promised them, Israel. Joshua distinguished himself as both a military and spiritual leader during the critical days of the conquest of Canaan. However there was another individual that was crucial to the effort...

**Joshua 14:6-12** *The people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite spoke: "You'll remember what GOD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me back at Kadesh Barnea. I was forty years old when Moses the servant of GOD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land. And I brought back an honest and accurate report. My companions who went with me discouraged the people, but I stuck to my guns, totally with GOD, my God. That was the day that Moses solemnly promised, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance, you and your children's, forever. Yes, you have lived totally for GOD.' Now look at me: GOD has kept me alive, as he promised. It is now forty-five years since GOD spoke this word to Moses, years in which Israel wandered in the wilderness. And here I am today, eighty-five years old! I'm as strong as I was the day Moses sent me out. I'm as strong as ever in battle, whether coming or going. So give me this hill country that GOD promised me. You yourself heard the report, that the Anakim were there with their great fortress cities. If GOD goes with me, I will drive them out, just as GOD said."*

As much as God's mighty acts expressed through the actions of Moses and Joshua was a source of inspiration, Caleb's sustained **faith** in God was just as inspiring.

## Focal Point...

### Seeing or Believing

Quite often the desire to make God-honoring choices is threatened by **opposition**.

Caleb, in his desire to trust God found himself at odds with those whom he believed possessed **similar** faith:

**Numbers 13:30-33** *Caleb interrupted, called for silence before Moses and said, "Let's go up and take the land—now. We can do it." 31-33 But the others said, "We can't attack those people; they're way stronger than we are." They spread scary rumors among the People of Israel. They said, "We scouted out the land from one end to the other—it's a land that swallows people whole. Everybody we saw was huge. Why, we even saw the Nephilim giants (the Anak giants come from the Nephilim). Alongside them we felt like grasshoppers. And they looked down on us as if we were grasshoppers."*

Sustaining faith is threatened when we:

- ...**focus** on the size and strength of the problem.
- ...exaggerate the **hopelessness** of our position.
- ...seek the **sympathy** of like-minded people.
- ...view **ourselves** from a weak and helpless perspective.

Faith is defeated by these barriers, but faith is always sustained by the strength of God's **promises**:

**Numbers 14:24** *"But my servant Caleb—this is a different story. He has a different spirit; he follows me passionately. I'll bring him into the land that he scouted and his children will inherit it."*

### Five Facets of Sustaining Faith...

1. **Believing** when we don't see it.

**Hebrews 11:1** *"The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see."*

2. **Obeying** when we don't understand it..

**Hebrews 11:8** *"By an act of faith, Abraham said yes to God's call to travel to an unknown place that would become his home. When he left he had no idea where he was going."*

### 3. **Giving** when we don't have it.

#### 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

<sup>1</sup> Now I want to tell you, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done for the churches in Macedonia. <sup>2</sup> Though they have been going through much trouble and hard times, their wonderful joy and deep poverty have overflowed in rich generosity. <sup>3</sup> For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford but far more. And they did it of their own free will. <sup>4</sup> They begged us again and again for the gracious privilege of sharing in the gift for the Christians in Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup> Best of all, they went beyond our highest hopes, for their first action was to dedicate themselves to the Lord and to us for whatever directions God might give them.

### 4. **Expecting** before we receive it.

**Hebrews 11:30** “By faith, the Israelites marched around the walls of Jericho for seven days, and the walls fell flat.”

### 5. **Trusting** if we don't get it.

**Hebrews 11:39** “Not one of these people, even though their lives of faith were exemplary, got their hands on what was promised.”

## *Turning Point...*

God hears and answers every prayer; sometimes He doesn't respond the way we **want** Him to...

Real faith is not something we **feel**, **think** or **say**...

Real faith is something that we **do**.

Our challenge:

Believers – simply ask, “*Father God – Do I allow my faith in You to sustain me?*”

Seekers – sustaining faith only comes from the One who gave His life so that we can freely accept by faith God's gift of salvation. To invite Christ into your heart, simply pray,

*Father God, I come before you today, asking you to save me. I invite your Son Jesus Christ into my heart to be my Lord and Savior. Please forgive me of sin in my life; cleanse my heart and my spirit. Father, I want to trust in your promises and accept that they are totally true. And with your help, guide me toward being the person you created me to be. In Jesus' name -- Amen*