

who believed God for his provisions. He raised over 4 million dollars for his orphanages and never asked men for a dime. When he had needs, he took them to God, asking in faith, and he received that which he needed.)

***Faith is more than saying that you believe; it is acting on what you believe. (Heb. 11:1)***

It takes faith to win the spiritual victory. In fact, faith in God alone can give us the victory we seek- **Heb. 11:6; Rom. 14:23!**

### **III. CALEB'S COURAGE**

Commitment led to confidence - confidence to courage. Caleb had to scale 3 great obstacles in his quest for his Canaan.

**He Had To Overcome Grasshoppers - Num. 13:33** For Caleb to claim what God had promised he had to go against the majority. (III. Jesus - He was usually alone in everything He did!) III. The Cants and the Canters will always surround the people of true faith.

There will always be someone saying that it can't be done, it's never been done like that before, we can't afford it, etc. Sometimes you will stand alone, but if you are standing on the Word of God in the will of God, then you were never in better company!

**He Had To Overcome Giants - Num. 14:8-9** All of us have giants in our lives. Giants of discouragement, finances, sickness, family, distress, doubt and the truth is - we can't defeat them ourselves. We have 2 options.

We can say look how small we are compared to those giants. **This is the outlook of fear! (2 Tim. 1:7)**

Or look how small those giants are compared to God! **This is the uplook of faith! (Phil. 4:13; Eph. 3:20; Matt. 28:18)** Fighting giants is good for you! ( **Num. 14:9 - Giants are bread**)

Derek Redmond is a British runner who participated in the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. Barely into the 400-meter race, he pulled a hamstring and fell to the ground. Everyone thought he was finished, but much to the surprise of the spectators this courageous athlete slowly stood and began to hobble around the track. However, even with such tenacity it was apparent that there was simply no way he could finish the race. Just as he was about to fall again, a man came out of the stands, put his arm around the injured runner, and assisted him all the way across the finish line. The stadium roared with approval as Derek Redmond completed his race.

The scene was a moving one, made even more significant by the realization that the one who came alongside Derek

was his own father. Together, linked arm in arm, father and son crossed the finish line, as one.

When we are facing life's giants and are in danger of falling, the Heavenly Father comes alongside of us to help us carry on for His glory.

**He Had To Overcome Gray Hairs - Josh. 14:10-11** What does this tell us? When God makes a promise, he will give us the strength to see its fulfillment! **Never count God, or yourself out.** True faith looks beyond the present circumstance and sees the provision of the Almighty!

"Comedian Jerry Clower tells a story about Uncle Versie Ledbetter who had a mule named Della. One day Della fell into a cistern Uncle Versie thought he had covered up but hadn't. "Uncle Versie had a problem. There was his best mule down at the bottom of that cistern and no way he could get the mule out of there. He didn't want her to stay down there and starve to death, so he decided he would get a shovel and cover her up. It would be cruel, but it wouldn't be as cruel and inhumane as to let Della starve to death in the bottom of that deep cistern. Uncle Versie took a shovelful of dirt and threw it down into the cistern and every time a shovelful of dirt hit old Della, she'd shake the dirt off and stomp it. It wasn't long before Della had shaken off enough dirt and stomped it so that she was high enough to jump out of the cistern."

We're like that mule--either our problems will bury us or we can keep trampling them down until we rise above them.

### **IV. Josh. 14:13-14 CALEB'S CONQUEST**

Caleb experienced what God had promised!

He climbed the mountains and he defeated the giants - he claimed his possession.

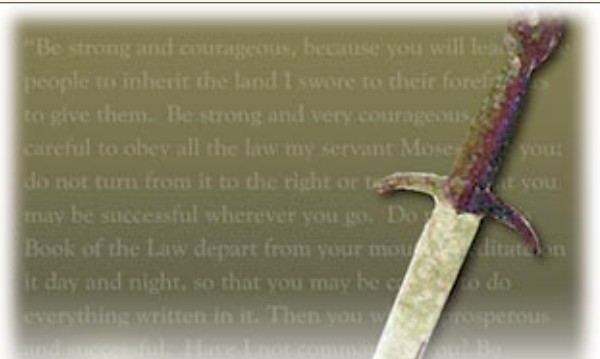
The name of the place Caleb inherited was named **Hebron**. This means "**Fellowship**". Caleb refused to quit until he had obtained everything the Lord has for him! He refused to stop until he had obtained that place of fellowship with God.

Folks, that ought to be our battle cry this morning! **We ought to refuse to give up, back up, or shut up or be held up, until we have stood up, lined up, read up, prayed up, confessed up, stored up, spoke up, looked up, and filled up on everything the Lord wants to give His children!** We ought to settle for nothing less than that place of perfect fellowship with the Lord our God!

What about you, have you entered your Canaan and claimed your possession? It isn't God's will for you to wander around in the wilderness of defeat forever. It is His will that you walk in victory and in His power-**1 Cor. 15:57; 2 Cor. 2:14.**

# AGAPE

## PULPIT SERIES



# JOSHUA

Strength and Courage

# CALEB

Rev. Michael K. Gantt

March 29, 2009

AGAPE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

30 Canal Street  
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

Ph. (802) 257-4069

Fax (802) 254-4239

agape@sover.net

Rev. Michael Gantt, Senior Pastor

M. Bryan Gantt, Associate Pastor

Joshua 14:6-14 - This passage centers on a man called Caleb. Caleb was a part of Israel when they left Egypt. He was there when God divided the waters of the Red Sea. By the way - Israel crossing the Red Sea is a picture of Salvation. Free from bondage and free from Pharaoh. Observing Israel as they journey through the wilderness shows us there is much more to salvation than just being set free. God had a land flowing with milk and honey prepared for them. It would be a land of giants and a land of battles, but it was theirs if they wanted it. Now, as you know - Israel chose to wander in the wilderness. Here's another great picture of the Christian life. God saves us, and promises us that we can have a life of victory and intense spiritual joy, but rather than claim what is rightfully ours - things like peace, joy, fellowship, power, and the glory of God, we choose to live in a spiritual wilderness, defeated and depressed.

This morning I want to tell you that many Christians are guilty of spiritual window-shopping. Now nothing is wrong with window-shopping! A lot of folks like to do it. Men normally don't like it.

*A fellow said to his wife - "Why do you call it shopping? You never buy anything." She replied - Well, why do you call it fishing? You never catch anything!"*

As Christians, we need to do more than window-shop with God's promises, we need to appropriate them. This morning I want us to see what it was that enabled this 85-year-old man to possess that which God had promised him. Caleb pictures the Christian who is willing to pay the price, fight the battles and win the victory that God has waiting for him. In these verses, we are shown how we too can claim our little part of Canaan and walk in victory day by day! Allow me to speak to you for a little while about **Caleb: The Gray-haired Conqueror.**

### I Josh. 14:8, 9, 14 CALEB'S COMMITMENT

Now the first key to Caleb success was that God had all of Caleb that there was! Note the repeated phrase "**Wholly followed the Lord.**" This is said about Caleb 6 times in the Old Testament. It is a phrase that means "**To close the gap.**" It is a phrase used by hunters to refer to their closing the gap between themselves and their prey. It refers to the fact that Caleb was committed to keeping the distance between himself and the Lord at a minimum. **Every inch, every ounce, every nerve, every fiber of Caleb belonged to God.** Now you may think that because you are not a preacher or deacon or SS teacher or whatever, God doesn't expect to have all of you. **Wrong - Wrong - Wrong. God deserves your all.**

*When Julius Caesar landed on the shores of Britain with his Roman legions, he took a bold and decisive step to ensure that success of his military venture. Ordering his men to halt on the edge of the Cliffs of Dover, he commanded them to look down at the water below. To their amazement, they saw every ship in*

*which they had crossed the channel engulfed in flames. Caesar had deliberately cut off any possibility of retreat! Now that his soldiers were unable to return to the continent, there was nothing left for them to do but to advance and conquer! And that is exactly what they did. **Too many Christians have left themselves some sort of an escape hatch back into the old life of sin. We need to burn every bridge that leads back to the old life and set our minds to the task of conquering our Canaan.***)

"Three little girls were talking about their dads. One said, 'My father is a doctor, and he practices medicine.' Another said, 'My dad's an attorney, and he practices law.' The third said, 'My father is a Christian, but he doesn't practice anymore.' 'There are a lot of Christians like that today.'")

Half-hearted Christians are faint-hearted Christians and they never learn to conquer the giants in their lives.

The story is told of a man who rode in his car as it was being towed to be repaired. When they arrived at the repair shop, the tow truck driver told him, "I didn't think I was going to make it up that big hill." The man replied, "I didn't either. That's why I kept the brakes on so we wouldn't roll backwards." To live without total dedication to Christ is the same as trying to go forward and to hold back at the same time.

**"A double - minded man is unstable in all his ways," James 1:8.** There is only one way to stand up against the devil and the hordes of hell and that's to be totally surrendered to Jesus.

Jesus demands total surrender- In his book One Crowded Hour, Tim Bowden describes an incident in Borneo in 1964. Nepalese fighters known as Gurkhas were asked if they would be willing to jump from airplanes into combat against the Indonesians. The Gurkhas didn't clearly understand what was involved, but they bravely said they would do it, asking only that the planes fly slowly over a swampy area and no higher than 100 feet. When they were told that the parachutes would not have time to open at that height, the Gurkhas replied, "Oh, you didn't mention parachutes before!" Jesus calls us to follow Him with a similar kind of commitment and courage, willing to risk all for His sake.

It's kind of like **Ham and eggs.** Now the chicken was definitely involved, but the pig was committed!)

D. L. Moody was saved at the age of 19. D. L. Moody heard an evangelist by the name of Henry Varley say, "The world has yet to see what God can do in and through and with and for a man wholly committed to him. D.L. Moody said, "By God's grace I will be that man!" He was an uncultured, uneducated, untrained shoe salesman but God used him to move 2 continents for Christ. Why? - He was committed! Are you totally sold out to Jesus Christ and Him alone today?

All Jesus wants from you is your total commitment. Anything less will keep you from reaching your Canaanland victory.

**All this comes down to one truth. If you, like Caleb, will close the gap between yourself and Him. If you will pursue God with every fiber of your being, He will do the same toward you - James 4:8.")**

### II Josh. 14:12 CALEB'S CONFIDENCE

What was it that gave 85 year old Caleb the idea he could be a giant killer? Caleb's confidence (faith) was in God's word. vs10 & 12 (III. **Deut.1:34-36, "And the LORD heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying, Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers, Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD.**")

Caleb had seen the Promised Land and for 45 years that vision had burned in his heart as he wandered through the wilderness! While others complained, Caleb looked for a mountain where milk and honey flowed and where the grapes of Eschol grew. He was able to see beyond his circumstances into the promises of the Lord. We need some people who have been cut from that same cloth!

I can see Caleb now climbing that mountain with a sword in one hand and a deed in the other while singing to the top of his lungs, "**I want that mountain! I want that mountain! Where the milk and honey flow, where the grapes of Eschol grow. I want mountain! I want that mountain! The mountain that the Lord has given me!**". Caleb knew God had given it to him so he claimed it.

*Faith is not positive thinking.*

*Faith is not optimism.*

*Faith is not looking on the bright side.*

**Faith is simply acting on what God says.**

The captain of an ocean steamer tells that on one occasion his ship was engulfed in a dense fog off the coast of Newfoundland. It was Wednesday evening and the captain had been of the bridge for 24 hours when someone tapping him on his shoulder startled him. He turned and saw one of his passengers-George Mueller. "Captain," said Mueller, "I must be in Quebec on Saturday afternoon." "That's impossible!" replied the captain. "I'm helpless!" Mueller suggested, "Let's go down to the chart room and pray." The captain thought he had a lunatic on board. "Do you know how dense the fog is?" he asked. "No," came the reply, "my eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God who controls every circumstance of my life." Once in the chart room, Mueller got down on his knees and prayed, "O Lord, if it is consistent with Thy will, please remove this fog in 5 minutes. Thou knowest the engagement Thou didst make for me in Quebec for Saturday. I believe it is Thy will." After Mueller prayed, the Captain started to pray. Mueller stopped him and said, "there's no use for you to pray, God has already answered my prayer. The fog is gone." This is the same George Mueller