

The Kind of Fathers and Men Our Nation Needs

Father's Day 2021

Thesis: Let's paint a picture of the kind of fathers and men our nation needs, with God helping us.

Text: Joshua 14:6-14

1. Happy Father's Day!
2. I am grateful for the fathers and men here at Calvary.
 - a. I am grateful for my own dad.
 - b. I am also grateful for the spiritual fathers and grandfathers that are here in this body.
3. I pray for mercy and healing for those who are fatherless, or who had really bad fathers.
4. Our first formation is so critical. How fathers and mothers relate to children forms and shapes them.
 - a. Most of us have work to do related to our first formation, even if we had a good parents.
 - b. We have much to learn from our fathers.
 - c. We have to unlearn some things.
 - d. We have to work through healing on other issues with our fathers.
 - e. Each of us has to work toward building the kind of life with the Lord's help that God wants us to have, no matter what kind of person or example our earthly fathers gave us or didn't give us.
(Recommendation: <https://www.Faithwalking.us>.)
 - i. **Deconstruct** parts of our first formation that don't work for us as adults.
 - ii. **Disempower** vows and wrong ways of showing up.
 - iii. **Develop new skills** for showing up as the people God has called us to be.
 - iv. **Learn to take responsibility** for our own lives and to live as God intends for us to live, no matter what kind of parents we had.

Today, I want to paint a picture of the kind of fathers and men our nation needs.

As we celebrate Father's Day, I pray that fathers, and men in general, will embrace the responsibilities of manhood and serve in their homes and in our culture in ways that are pleasing to the Lord.

Statistics repeatedly reveal the negative impact on children, and on society as a whole, brought about by the absence, neglect, or brokenness of men and fathers.

Today, we want to consider the example of Caleb, one of the original 12 spies that surveyed the Promised Land, prior to the Wilderness Wanderings (Numbers 13 – 14).

Caleb's commitment to the Lord never diminished. His life was lived for the Lord and his desire to serve God never wavered.

In Joshua 14:6-14, we pick up the report in the latter years of Caleb's life, after the Israelites have entered Canaan. His commitment and desire present a challenge and invitation for all men today.

Let's look at the example, testimony, and values Caleb possessed and expressed in his day, that we might be inspired to be such men of God in our day.

Context: In Joshua Chapters 13 – 21, we have the record of the dividing up of the promised land among the tribes and people of Israel.

Joshua 14:6-14. Now the men of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God at Kadesh Barnea about you and me. 7 I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land. And I brought him back a report according to my convictions, 8 but my brothers who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt with fear. I, however, followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly. 9 So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly.' 10 "Now then, just as the LORD promised, he has kept me alive for forty-five years since the time he said this to Moses, while Israel moved about in the desert. So here I am today, eighty-five years old! 11 I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then. 12 Now give me this hill country that the LORD promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there and their cities were large and fortified, but, the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said." 13 Then Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance. 14 So Hebron has belonged to Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite ever since, because he followed the LORD, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly (Joshua 14:6-14).

The testimony and reputation of Caleb: kind of fathers and men our nation needs (Joshua 14:6-14).

1. We need men of character.

- a. According to the Lord, Caleb was a man of character (Joshua 14:6).
 - i. *Now the men of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God at Kadesh Barnea about you and me..." (Joshua 14:6).*
- b. We are familiar with the account of the spies (Numbers 13 – 14). Of the 12 spies, only Joshua and Caleb believed they could inhabit the land as God had promised. They alone desired to possess the land prior to the years of wandering. God knew Caleb's heart, and the people did as well.
 - i. *But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it (Numbers 14:24).*
- c. Caleb was recognized for his character, his commitment to the Lord, and his faith in the Lord.
- d. We need men of character in our day, men who have a reputation for faithfulness to the Lord and faith in God.

2. We need men of commitment.

- a. *I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land... (Joshua 14:7). Now then, just as the LORD promised, he has kept me alive for forty-five years since the time he said this to Moses, while Israel moved about in the desert. So here I am today, eighty-five years old! (Joshua 14:10).*
- b. Caleb was forty years old when he first visited Canaan. He is now 85 and he is still committed to the Lord.
 - i. He endured the years of wandering, knowing that God was faithful and that he would possess the land of promise.
 - ii. It would have been easy to have given up after all those years of difficulty and delay, but Caleb remained committed.
- c. We need men who will remain committed to the Lord in these difficult days.
 - i. We need men who will not be defeated by the burdens of life or the discouragement of others.
 - ii. We need men who will keep their eyes on the prize and remain faithful to the Lord and the responsibilities which the Lord has given.

3. We need men of courage.

- a. *...but my brothers who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt with fear... (Joshua 14:8).*
- b. Caleb and Joshua were the only two of the twelve spies with enough faith and courage to follow the Lord.

- i. The other ten were fearful and passed along their anxiety to the rest of the Hebrew people.
 - ii. Although he was greatly outnumbered, Caleb chose courage and would not back down.
 - c. There is much we face today that creates fear in the hearts of many people. It is easy to look at circumstances and lose our courage. Life is not easy. We will face battles along the way. But we must continue in the fight, with the Lord helping us.
 - d. We need men who will choose to access courage, even if they stand alone.
- 4. **We need men of conviction.**
 - a. *I, however, followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly (Joshua 14:8).*
 - b. It would have been easy for Caleb to have given in to the pressure.
 - i. The people of Israel were determined to avoid the struggles necessary to inhabit Canaan. The people who lived in the land were mighty and many.
 - ii. Caleb, however, was a man of conviction. He had placed his faith and trust in the Lord. He knew that God was stronger than any adversary they would face. He knew God had promised the land as their inheritance and Caleb wholly followed the Lord.
 - c. This too is an area where some men are weak today. Few men are willing to go against the grain. Many men will compromise rather than differentiate for the Lord.
 - d. It is easy to get our eyes off of Jesus and on the struggles we face. Daily we face temptation to give up self in an effort to avoid conflict or controversy.
 - e. We need men who will say what they think, feel, and believe; who will allow others to say what they think, feel, and believe; and, who will work to stay connected to others.
 - f. We need men of conviction who will stand upon the Word of God without fail and continue to serve the Lord, even if the majority oppose them.
- 5. **We need men of confidence.**
 - a. *So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God wholeheartedly' (Joshua 14:9).*
 - b. Caleb never doubted the promises of God. Moses had confirmed to him that he would one day inherit the land that he had scouted. There had been days of difficulty, but Caleb's faith remained strong. He was confident in the Word of God.

- c. There will be difficult times as we journey through life. There will be times when our faith is tested, and we will wonder if we will ever make it. We must continue to put our confidence in our Lord. Let us refuse to depend upon our wisdom or ability, and let us seek to put our faith in the Lord.
- d. Sometimes, people will let us down. Circumstances in life will bring disappointment. And, we can remain confident in Jesus.
- e. We need men who have confidence in God, in what God says, and in partnering with the Lord.

6. We need men of determination.

- a. *“Now then, just as the LORD promised, he has kept me alive for forty-five years since the time he said this to Moses, while Israel moved about in the desert. So here I am today, eighty-five years old! 11 I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I’m just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then” (Joshua 14:10-11).*
- b. At this point in his life, Caleb was 85 years old, yet he revealed his intention and determination to possess what was promised to him.
- c. Caleb had endured much adversity, and even though he was growing older, he was determined to inherit the land.
- d. God had been faithful, bringing him this far, and Caleb wasn’t about to abandon the effort this close to the finish.
- e. We need men of determination in our day.
 - i. We need those who are committed to finishing the race.
 - ii. We need those who realize that they need God each day and that with God nothing is impossible.
 - iii. This is not the time or place to give up or quit.
 - iv. Our bodies may weaken as we age, and we may be unable to accomplish many of the things we once did, but we are invited to remain faithful until the Lord calls us home.
 - v. Far too many have abandoned the effort just short of victory.

7. We need men of desire.

- a. *“Now give me this hill country that the LORD promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there and their cities were large and fortified, but, the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said” (John 14:12).*
- b. Many years before, Caleb had surveyed the land and envisioned possessing a particular mountain. His commitment to the Lord had brought the promise of inheriting that parcel of land. Caleb never lost his desire for his inheritance. Each day, he longed to receive that which had been promised. He would be satisfied with nothing less.

- c. Sometimes, we settle for less than what God has for us. We continually live below our means spiritually. God has a mountain of victory for us to enjoy, but often we settle for the valley of defeat or compromise.
- d. We need men of desire like Caleb.
 - i. May we not be satisfied with anything less than what God has to offer.
 - ii. May we seek the Lord, walking with God daily in such a way as to receive that which God has promised.
 - iii. I want to possess the mountain of God's goodness and presence. I want to inhabit the place God desires for me, the place the Lord has prepared for me in this life.

8. We need men of dependence upon God.

- a. *"[with] the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said" (John 14:12b).*
- b. Forty-five years earlier Caleb was prepared to possess the land by faith.
 - i. He knew then they were unable in themselves to conquer Canaan, but he believed God was able.
 - ii. Now, as he stood on the brink of his inheritance, his faith in God had not changed. Caleb knew the task ahead would not be easy. He knew the struggle would be hard, but he was not depending upon his ability.
 - iii. He knew God was able to provide. If he was to possess his inheritance, God would have to be with him as he faced the obstacles ahead.
- c. We need men who know that they need the help of God every day, and who they live into that dependence willingly.
 - i. Sometimes as we age, we are tempted to depend more upon our abilities, our wisdom, or the experience we have gained or possess.
 - ii. We face a difficult task ahead. We are opposed on every hand. We will never overcome in and of ourselves. If we are to be successful and inhabit our promised land, having the opportunity to pass something on to future generations, we must have the help and guidance of the Lord.
 - iii. We need God as much today as we ever have.
 - iv. With the Lord helping me... let that be our prayer.

9. We need men of destiny.

- a. *Then Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance. 14 So Hebron has belonged to Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite ever since, because he followed the LORD, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly (Joshua 14:13-14).*
- b. Victory and reward did not come quickly for Caleb.

- i. He had to serve the Lord faithfully for many years before he obtained his blessing.
 - ii. But, in the end it was worth the effort.
 - iii. He was faithful and committed unto the Lord and God honored his faithfulness. Caleb was rewarded because he wholly followed God toward his destiny.
 - iv. He had a finishing spirit.
 - c. Caleb received what all the others could have if they had only possessed the same finishing spirit.
 - i. His walk with the Lord and obedience to God made the difference.
 - ii. Many today do not enjoy the abundance of God because they fail to follow the Lord.
 - iii. If we are to receive his abundance, we must walk with our God.
 - d. Our reward may not be immediate, but if we persevere, God will reward us. If you are a child of God, this life may bring little in the way of abundance. But I can assure you, the inheritance that waits will be worth all the effort.
 - e. We need men of destiny: people who see the end from the beginning and have a finishing spirit.
- 10. **Conclusion.** The testimony and reputation of Caleb: kind of fathers and men our nation needs.
 - a. This message is for fathers and men, but there is application for each of us.
 - i. What is the Lord saying to you? What is getting stirred up? What are we thinking or feeling?
 - ii. What do others see as they observe the life we live?
 - iii. When our time on earth is through, will we leave anything of value behind?
 - iv. Spend time listening to the Lord and reflecting on what God is saying to you.
 - b. Caleb enjoyed the inheritance he received because of his relationship with God. We are all on a journey, headed somewhere. Let's possess our possession and promised land, with the Lord helping us.
 - c. Let's recognize that life is short. What we do in response to the Lord now counts for eternity.
 - d. God invites each of us into a personal relationship with him through Jesus. With the help of the Spirit of Christ, you can walk with God now in a way that counts both now and for eternity.