

THE BIG IDEA: Half-way is no way to live God's way.

We never go halfway on the things that matter most.

Marriage vows aren't written halfway: "I promise to love you and honor you from this day forward to a point."

Families don't work that way. We don't look at our 5 year olds and say, "We'll feed you, but only after you've brought home a check."

The Take-Off

Today, I want you to meet a young man who became an old man but stayed the same man.

That's quite a statement, too, because most of us change a lot as we age, don't we?

[15 signs you're getting older]

But Caleb was different, and I'm hoping that his passion will inspire each of us to greater passion, too.

So turn to Number 13, and let's meet an amazing man...

1. A young Caleb

- a. Was one of 12 spies sent to explore the land that God had promised Israel
- b. What we know about young Caleb is that he was already a leader (13:2 and 3)
- c. So he wasn't wasting the days away on the Xbox in his mom's basement
- d. He was a central figure in the direction of a nation, so we can safely assume he was a young man of character
- e. He was in touch with reality
 - He saw the same things the other spies saw
 - The land was more than they had imagined
 - 13:23 - a cluster of grapes had to be carried on a pole by 2 men!
 - 13:27-33 - they all saw the opportunity and the obstacles
 - 14:9 - Caleb saw the obedience
- f. The result was catastrophic
 - No one over 20 would be a part of the promise (14:29)
 - 10 of the 12 spies died that day (14:37)
 - The children suffered because of the parents' disobedience (14:33)
- g. But Caleb was 2 of the spies who survived (14:38)
- h. Before we leave young Caleb, let's ask the question - why didn't he die?
- i. 13:24 - because he had a different spirit and followed the Lord wholeheartedly
- j. That's important. Young Caleb was all in.

2. An old Caleb

- a. What about old Caleb? Let's fast forward and see. We find old Caleb in Joshua 14.
- b. Finally, the Israelites are getting ready to move in. It's moving day 45 years later.
- c. Joshua - one of the spies who didn't die - is now the leader, and in 14:6, old Caleb talks to him.
 - 14:6-10 - he remembers the story and the promise
 - he's an old man telling an old story
 - 14:10 - Caleb forgets the past and talks about now
 - 14:11-12 - at 85, Caleb is asking for the best land and the hardest land to get
 - 14:12 - old Caleb is still in touch with reality (the enemies are still there)
 - 14:13-14 - Caleb gets his land
- d. Why? 14:14 - because old Caleb was still following the Lord wholeheartedly.
- e. God was all in on Caleb because Caleb was all in on God.

3. What we can learn from Caleb

- a. He never gave up on a promise, even when others around him did
- b. He didn't run away, he didn't blame, he didn't grow old and bitter
- c. He was all in on God even when others around him weren't
- d. He was persistent
- e. He was courageous

- f. He was passionate about the promises of God
- g. Perhaps the greatest thing we can learn from this is that **the passion of God for a city is greater than a generation**
- h. Those who live wholeheartedly for the Lord know that.
- i. We don't live with only ourselves in mind.
- j. "Me and Jesus" is half-hearted thinking
- k. It's a selfish mindset that sounds spiritual, but it only goes halfway.
- l. God wants to redeem a people, not just a person. A city, not just a church.
- m. He calls us to an obedience that is driven by a passion that will go all the way, even when the way is hard
- n. Why? The Big Idea says it: **Half-way is no way to live God's way.**
- o. If Caleb lived halfway - for himself and no others, maybe he tries to take the land at 40 instead of walking around with "losers" for another 45 years.
- p. But Caleb knew the plan of God was bigger than him, and going all in with God meant leading others to go all in with God as well

The Landing

So what, right?

What does all of this mean for each of us right now?

I hope it means that I'm looking at a church full of Calebs.

Some of you are young Calebs, and some of you are old Calebs.

But if we're serving God wholeheartedly - if we're all in - then all of us are passionate Calebs!

Are there giants we're facing as we move into the promises of God? Absolutely!

But do we have a different spirit in us? Romans 8:11 says we do - the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead.

2 Timothy 1:7 is a promise we can go all in on!

We don't have a spirit of fear like the 10 spies who only saw defeat.

We have a spirit of power, love and sound mind. An overcoming spirit and mindset, because we serve a King who went all the way, and so we're going all the way for him because it's the only response he's worthy of!

Half-way is no way to live God's way!

Let's pray.