

Following God Fully

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- Psalter 62
- Read Numbers 13:17-14:10
- Psalter 415:2, 6, 10
- Psalter 73:1, 5, 6
- Psalter 100

"But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it."

-Numbers

14:24

With God's help, I want to take up with you the theme of Following God Fully. I have three main thoughts to convey to you.

First, *the meaning* of this expression: what it means that Caleb followed God fully.

Second, *its root in grace*: why Caleb could follow God fully.

Third, its reward of grace: the reward God granted to Caleb because he followed Him fully.

Scripture provides for us many thumbnail biographical sketches. Some, examples of people we should not follow: Judas Iscariot, Ahab, Cain; others-great men and women of God-whom we are called to follow as mentors as we journey through this world. Among these great mentors is a godly man, seldom preached about and often ignored even in sound literature, by the name of Caleb. Caleb is an eminent example in godliness and God attributes to him great grace, saying that he followed God fully all the days of his life.

If you are a true believer, I am sure this is your desire. You don't desire to serve God half-heartedly; you desire to love Him with all your heart, your mind, your soul, your strength. You desire to live a consistent life; you desire to follow God fully. Today we set before you this great man of God, praying that you and I may

be given grace to follow his example through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We know that Caleb was one of the twelve spies sent out into the land of Canaan to bring back a report to Moses. He was one of two spies that brought back a report of encouragement encouraging Israel to do battle against the inhabitants of the land and to conquer them as God had promised them they would do. After forty days, when the spies had completed their task and brought back their report, it is remarkable that all twelve agreed on several facts. They all agreed the land Canaan was a good land, flowing with milk and honey. They brought back a huge cluster of grapes from Eshcol. They all agreed that the inhabitants of the land were, for the most part, war-like people. They all agreed there were giants in the land: big men, eight to nine feet tall "children of Anak" (Num. 13:22). They all agreed that cities were walled about; they were great strongholds. They all agreed that it would be complicated and difficult to fight against these foes. They all told the true story as far as the *facts* were concerned. However, when it came to the consequences of those facts - when it came to the conclusion, the bottom line, "What shall we do?"—the twelve spies disagreed with one another.

The majority report, presented by ten, was very negative. They said there was no use to try to overcome these enemies; they were too strong and too large. It is impossible. They said: "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (Num. 13:31-33).

Can you imagine two and a half million people, for that is what Israel numbered at the time, hearing this dreadful report: "We were in our own sight as grasshoppers" (Num. 13:33)? "We have come through the wilderness, we have come at last to the Promised Land and now we face giants and walled cities and impossibilities." Fear and unbelief took hold of them. Fear and unbelief are the parents of their conclusion. Fear and unbelief, friends, always bring a negative report. Fear and unbelief can have a right account of the facts but they assess those

facts incorrectly.

The ten false spies left out one important fact—they forgot God and His promise! They looked at the circumstances rather than God. They forgot what God had said: "Go in to possess the land, which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it" (Josh. 1:11). You and I are prone to do the same thing, aren't we? Difficulties and troubles enter our lives, personal troubles, domestic trials, trials with our occupation, church troubles. We are prone to look at circumstances rather than God. We are prone to respond in unbelief, aren't we? Unbelief measures the walls and tallies up the Amalekites, the Hittites, the Canaanites and all the giants; and the conclusion is--we can't do it!

The people are inclined to follow the majority. What a tragedy: two and a half million people led astray by ten men! What a responsibility every Christian has to lead people rightly, and especially a servant of God. We ministers are, in some senses, spies in the land. Every week we are to search the Scriptures. We are to spy out the truths of God's grace in the Scriptures. We are to report on them the following Sabbath and tell of the wonders and the glory and the might of our God. Every Sabbath we are to tell people about the dangers they face and the way to Zion, about their enemies, about their problems, and the narrow road that leads to salvation. Yet, we are not to overwhelm people with these problems but direct them to Jesus Christ and tell them that our God is able: without Christ we can do nothing but in Christ we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. That is the report we are to bring - our God is able! Look not to circumstances, look to the living God. The ten spies forgot that. They forgot about the God of the Red Sea. They forgot the God who said to them, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he shall shew to you to day" (Exod. 14:13); "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (verse 14).

How dreadful this majority report was! There was no faith in God's sovereignty. No faith in God's omnipotence. No faith in God's promises. These ten false spies didn't even rise to the level of ungodly Balaam who confessed, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Num. 23:19). Unbelief makes our problems big and it makes God small. The

tragedy of unbelief is that it drags masses of God's people into the "slough of despond" with it. When they are in their right place, God's Joshuas and God's Calebs have a different spirit, not a contagious unbelieving spirit that easily persuades people that the giants of Anak are larger than the promises of God thereby making the promises look weak. Then the vitals of faith are chipped away at and spiritual growth is stunted and people stop fearing God. But Joshua and Caleb bring God into the equation. Joshua and Caleb stand up and Caleb stills the people and says, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:30). You see, Joshua and Caleb believe that God is bigger than the largest giant in Canaan. Let us go, they say, and claim the inheritance that God has promised us. All twelve spies use their eyes; all twelve use their minds; but only Joshua and Caleb had a heart for God and for His people. They had a heart to walk the way of faith, dear friends. That is the way you and I are called to walk in this world—the way of faith.

The way of faith is not an easy way. God never promised His people an easy life, did He? The way of faith is a blessed way though not an easy way. It is a sure way though not an easy way. The way of faith urges people to trust God, to believe in His Son, to repent before Him, to walk in His ways, *to follow God fully*. Faith trusts - that is the nature of faith. Faith believes, trusts, and rests.

Caleb says that the giants shall become dwarfs before the promises of God. He says, "Rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not" (verse 9). So you see, this is the minority report of two who believe in God. This minority report is positive in nature. Caleb and Joshua believe that God will never go back on His Word. Dear friends, when we believe and live that, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we honor our God.

Joshua and Caleb dared to stand up against incredible pressure; you can imagine the other ten, and the two and a half million people behind them. Two men stand up boldly for the cause of God despite pressure from all their peers. Caleb, in this instance, appears to be the spokesman for the two. God honors his standing up even when the people take stones to stone them: "But all the congregation bade stone them with stones" (verse 10). Caleb doesn't flinch. Caleb doesn't say that

maybe he had got it a bit wrong or suggest that they sit down and talk over whether they really should go in to Canaan or send a second group of spies to compare notes. Caleb and Joshua do not suggest any compromise. No, Caleb says, "Stone me with stones but I will follow the Lord. Do what you must do but I must follow the Lord *fully*." That leads us to our text tonight.

1. Its Meaning by Grace

Notice, first of all, that "following God fully" is God's testimony of Caleb—not Caleb's testimony of himself. There is a big difference, isn't there? If you asked Caleb himself, no doubt he would say, "O my wicked heart. I have been so inconsistent. I have been so faltering. My obedience has been so meager." However, *God* said of Caleb, "My servant...hath followed me fully." That is what counts, friends, not what we say of ourselves, but what God says of us.

God gives a similar testimony of Job. We can't imagine Job saying, "I am thy perfect servant Job." However, God said of Job, "My servant Job, there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil" (Job 1:8), Caleb was such a man who received the benediction and approbation of his God. That is what we want, friends; that is what we want more than anything in all the world: that God will look down from heaven upon us, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and grant us His divine approbation. That He would say, "This is My child who has followed Me fully."

What does it mean to follow God *fully*? It means at least four things. It means first of all that Caleb followed God all his life. He followed God *persistently*. Turn to Joshua 14:13-14. This is what God's Word says of Caleb after his forty years in the wilderness, where he was surrounded by unbelieving people. "And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel" (Josh. 14:13-14). Here you have a testimony about Caleb in his old age that parallels our text. When he was a young man in his forties and when he was an old man in his eighties, God says the same thing of him. This is a man of consistency and persistency. This is a man of godliness. This is a man who did not serve God by fits and starts, as John Warburton used to say. Here is a man who served God

habitually, constantly, evenly. All those years he lived in the camp of the Israelites, Caleb refused to yield to the murmuring rebels that surrounded him. He was faithful unto death and God crowned him with a crown of life.

I wonder about you and me, friends. Do we follow the Lord persistently and consistently? Some people follow the Lord only for a season, don't they? They are like flames that rise up, then quickly die away. They seem to have meant well but when persecution comes, their flame of Christianity dies out and the smoke fades away until there is nothing left. Think of Lot's wife. She left Sodom and Gomorrah, but she gave up, looked back, and became a pillar of salt. Think of the Jews in John 6:66; they walked no more with Jesus. Think of the Galatians; Paul says, "Ye did run well" (Gal. 5:7); "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" (Gal. 3:1)

Still today, there are many people like that. Years ago, a former church member who was hospitalized seemed to be under great spiritual impressions. I had a strong hope that the Lord was converting this young man. He went back into his family, encountered the peer pressures around him, and all the impressions faded away. Can that be said of you or me? In times of adversity, do we lose our "Christianity"? In

times of pressure and persecution, do we fall away? Oh, what a tragedy! In times of persecution and difficulty the world watches us with a penetrating gaze: Is Christianity worth its salt? The world is watching you and me to observe if our Christianity persists in the face of persecution and affliction.

Secondly, to follow God fully means to follow Him sincerely--not only persistently but also *sincerely*, from the heart. It means to not be a hypocrite, not to be an outward Christian only. Everyone was against Caleb and Joshua. Numbers 14:10 says, "All the congregation"—notice that word *all*—"bade stone them with stones." They endured insults and jeers. Like Moses, they had to bear the reproach of Christ. Yet, Caleb could do nothing else because his heart was sincere before God.

Why were the people so angry that they were ready to stone Caleb? Because he exposed their religion or rather, their lack of religion. He removed all their excuses for not going into Canaan. He took away all their arguments. They were determined to cling to their unbelief, and Caleb reproached them. When you

reproach another man who is an unbeliever, you will often evoke persecution. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," 2 Timothy 3:12 says. It will happen, sometimes sooner, sometimes later; sometimes intensely, sometimes minimally. When we walk in the ways of God, we will suffer persecution.

Dear friends, we are called to confess God's name no matter where we are and no matter what the case. I once spoke on a train with a young woman who was an atheist. As I began lovingly to rebuke her because she told me she was going to go live with her boyfriend, she said to me, "You are not going to try to convert me, are you? I don't want to hear that kind of talk." She said, "It is too late in the evening to talk to me about God. Beside, I don't even know if I believe in Him." I asked, "What would you like me to talk to you about?" "Other things," she said. I said, "It seems to me that this is a pretty important thing for you to talk about because if God doesn't exist, then you are not under His command and you can go the way you want to, can't you? However, if God does exist, what do you think He would say about what you are going to do?" "Well," she said, "He would say I was going to live in sin, so I don't want to think about it.' That is natural man! We don't want to be confronted. We don't want guilt on our own doorstep. We don't want to face who and what we are. When we biblically and lovingly confront other people with who they are, we will suffer persecution, but we must be willing to pay the price.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne said, "Your best friend is the one who is willing to tell you the most truth about yourself." Scripture said it even better: "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Prov. 27:6). A man who follows God fully, follows God sincerely; he wants to say a word for God wherever he goes.

Martin Luther once said, "Suffering persecution is a mark of the true church." You know the marks of the church: the pure preaching of the Word, the right administration of the sacraments, the exercise of discipline in the church. Well, Luther would have us promote another mark because 2 Timothy 3:12 says: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." A person cannot go to heaven unrebuked or unpersecuted. How can you follow a suffering Savior and never have to suffer for His name's sake?

I wonder, congregation, do you ever suffer for the cause and the sake of Jesus Christ? Do you fear God more than man? John Brown wrote, "The fear of God means to esteem the smiles and frowns of God to be of greater weight and greater value than the smiles and frowns of men." That is the way to live. "Oh God, let me live in Thy smile. Let me fear Thy frown. Let me walk in Thy ways. Let me follow Thee *fully*." That doesn't mean, of course, that we may provoke people unnecessarily. It doesn't mean that we are anything other than truly loving to all people. But true love sometimes must say, "No." True love sometimes has to confront. If you really care for someone you want them to come with you, to follow the Lord, *fully*.

Thirdly, to follow God *fully* means to follow God, as an old divine used to say, *indivisibly*, or as-Thomas-Boston-said, "*universally*." That means with all my heart—not only with a sincere heart but also with all my heart. To follow God *fully* means to say with David, "I will make haste to run in the way of *all* thy commands" (Ps. 119:32). Some people pick and choose what part of God's will they want to do. They are very consistent in certain areas. Perhaps they are conservative Sabbath-keepers but neglect daily family worship. Perhaps they have very good habits in some areas of their lives but in other areas they say, "I know that this or that is wrong but you can't be perfect. You shouldn't be righteous overmuch. I know it's wrong but I'll just go ahead and do it. I think God will have mercy on me." That is the way some people pick and choose. When a certain commandment comes too close to home, they take refuge in the other commandments that they are supposedly following. Their obedience is partial, halting, and feigned.

Caleb wasn't that way. He said, as it were, "I want the whole fabric of my life to be one pattern. I want to have a seamless, one-track mind when it comes to obedience to God. I want to put blinders on and I want to follow God in the narrow way of salvation all my life. I do not want to turn to the right nor to the left. I want to follow God in everything. I want to follow Him with my thoughts, I want to follow Him with my words, I want to follow Him with my deeds. I want my life to be all of one pattern. I want my life to be an open epistle of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. O God, give me grace to follow Thee *fully*."

That is what we want if we are Christians, isn't it? We want an undivided heart. We don't want to follow God just when it is pleasant to do so. We don't want to be like Mr. Byends in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* who said of himself and those who lived in the town of Fairspeech, "We are always most zealous when religion goes in his silver slippers." In other words, there are people who walk religiously in the comfort of "silver slippers" so long as everything goes their way. But as soon as something crosses their will, they place their will above God's command. True Christians, however, detest such partiality toward God and His commandments. We want to be men and women and children of God who follow God with undivided heart.

How is it with us, friends? Are there pockets of our lives where we are engaging even now in any known sin? We must forsake them. We must cry for mercy to conquer our so-called bosom or besetting sins. We must pray to the Almighty that we may have strength to pierce every sin with the sword, to put every sin to death. The true child of God who is walking close with God will say, "O God, I wish every sin in me were dead." Can you say that? Are you following God *fully*?

Finally, to follow God fully means to follow God *exclusively*. Not only persistently, sincerely, and indivisibly, but exclusively. That means that we follow no one else whenever and wherever he or she does not follow Christ. It means, like Paul said, to follow Paul only in so far as he followed the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the maxim and the model of the entire Reformation movement to which we are all so greatly indebted. That is what the Reformers did; they followed no man further than that man followed the Lord Jesus Christ. Following God must be the pre-eminent pursuit of our lives. We must have no other goal in mind, no other desire in mind. Our soul must be consecrated to God. Our entire being must be caught up with this burning passion to walk in the King's highway of holiness.

Our text says, "my *servant* Caleb." A servant obeys his master. A servant yields total consecration; a willing servant is faithful. God says, "Caleb is My servant. He serves Me. He follows no one else." That is what we need, friends. Pray for grace in every trouble and trial that comes your way to follow God persistently, sincerely, indivisibly, and exclusively.

Perhaps you say, "That is so impossible. My heart is a well of iniquity, 'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?'" (Jer. 17:9). Indeed, that is true, isn't it? How was it possible, then, for Caleb to follow God *fully*? Our text tells us: "because he had another spirit with him and hath followed me fully." Let's consider what that means in our second thought,

2. Its Root in Grace

"Another spirit." These two words obviously contain the secret of how Caleb could follow God fully, but what do they mean? "Another spirit" means that Caleb had a different spirit than did the ten false spies. Theirs was a spirit of unbelief, his a spirit of faith. Theirs was a worldly spirit; his was heavenly. Theirs was a spirit of angry disobedience, his of affectionate obedience; theirs was satanic, his was of God; theirs was lazy, his was active. They wanted the rest without the journey, the reward without the labor, the victory without the warfare. They were led by their own spirits; Caleb was led by the Holy Spirit. He had a noble, courageous, and gentle spirit, a generous and heroic spirit, a self-denying and loyal spirit because he was moved by the Holy Spirit. That is the ultimate cause of the difference between Caleb and the ten false spies. It wasn't Caleb's own strength; it was the Holy Spirit working in him. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. 2:12). That is the spirit Caleb had.

Perhaps then you ask, "Why did Caleb have that Holy Spirit and why didn't the ten false spies have that Holy Spirit? What made the difference?" We answer: Only the free and sovereign mercy of God. The Holy Spirit was God's free gift to Caleb and God was pleased for reasons locked up in the secrets of His own heart by His sovereign electing love to have mercy on Caleb and not upon those ten false spies. It pleased God to do so and we cannot go beyond that, can we? We cannot probe beyond the sovereign mysteries of God's eternal love, nor need we do so, for there is nothing beyond that love. For His own reasons, God made Caleb His servant, and gave him His spirit to serve Him. Therefore there was no explanation in Caleb; there was nothing beyond sovereign covenantal mercy and love. Why did Caleb have another spirit? Because of sovereign grace; because God loved him with an everlasting love, therefore, with cords of lovingkindness, He drew him to follow

Him *fully*.

Caleb's obedience was first of all the work of the Holy Spirit in Caleb. Caleb was the instrument through which the Spirit worked. Caleb was involved; it didn't happen outside of him, but it was all of grace. Caleb was enabled to follow God fully through the meritorious work of the Perfect One the Lord Jesus Christ--of whom God said, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth" (Isa. 42:1). Caleb followed God *fully* because of the electing heart of the Father's love, through the meritorious obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The Triune God is involved. Jesus Christ followed His Father fully: "It is my Father's will"; "I am about my Father's business." He engrafted Caleb into Himself-into the vine..and the sap of Christ flowed into the veins of Caleb. Out of Christ and by the Spirit of Christ, Caleb followed God *fully*.

We need to pray for that spirit. We need to pray that we will be indwelt and governed by the Spirit of Christ so that we receive by true faith and with meekness the engrafted Word that is able to save our soul so that we follow God *fully*.

Perhaps you have one objection: If Caleb followed God *fully* by grace only, why did God give Caleb a reward? Notice the conclusion of our text: "him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it" (Num. 14:24). That leads us to our third thought, which is to examine God's gracious reward promised to Caleb.

3. Its Reward of Grace

To follow God fully, in the first place, means to follow Him by grace, persistently, sincerely, indivisibly, and exclusively. Secondly, that following is rooted in grace that is why Caleb could follow God *fully*. Thirdly, God rewards Caleb for following, out of grace. God's reward to Caleb is not a reward of merit; Caleb did not merit it. It is a reward of grace. What God does in His people by way of sanctification, He really gives to His people and He rewards His own work in them. Let me give you an example. Do you remember the story of the Canaanite woman? Christ worked faith in her. He matured that faith through her trials and then He crowns His own work by stating, "O woman, great is thy faith" (Matt.

15:28). God gives away His graces to His people, including the grace of faith, and then when they by His Spirit act out that faith, God rewards His own work within them with the crownings of grace.

Let me illustrate. When my birthday is approaching, my wife will take the money I have given to her, and tell our children, "Go buy a present for Dad for his birthday." When I receive the present, I don't say to my children, "I really don't need to thank you for this because you spent my money to get it." What a cruel father I would be to respond like that! Rather, I treat the gifts as if my children had earned the money to buy them. I thank them for those gifts with all my heart, and graciously reward them with embraces and kisses and affirming words. You see, God rewards the obedience of His people by His own grace. He gives them grace to follow Him, but is genuinely grateful when they do follow Him, and graciously rewards them.

Article 24 of the *Belgic Confession of Faith* is a beautiful statement on the doctrine of sanctification. At one point, it affirms that God is not obliged to us for the good works that we do, but we are obliged to Him, because He gives us the grace to do the good works. God's grace leads us to walk by grace, out of grace, to His glory. Therefore, the wonderful promises in Numbers 14:24 are just grace on top of grace. John tells us, "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace" (John 1:16). Literally, this means grace piled up on top of grace. The lives of God's people are like the ocean tide coming in: one wave of grace upon another — in prosperity and through affliction. Prosperity is grace; adversity is grace. Where would you be without adversity and persecution in your life? You would remain spiritually immature and become spoiled but God gives grace — wave after wave — precisely according to what we need. On top of it all comes His waves of gracious, precious promises. What a wonderful promise He gave to Caleb, crowning His own grace—"him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it" (Num. 14:24).

Actually, there are three promises here. In the first place, God is promising to preserve Caleb's life: "him will I bring into the land whereinto he went." Six hundred thousand men of that generation who were unbelieving, their spouses, and many of their children are all going to die in the wilderness, Caleb is in his forties

already and they are going to wander for forty years, but God says, "him will I bring into the land." Caleb and Joshua will outlive them all. He will be an old man in his eighties, nevertheless, "him will I bring into the land." It is a blessing when God promises long life upon obedience.

Secondly, God promises to give Caleb the land he spied out for an inheritance. That is fulfilled in the book of Joshua in a remarkable way. In Joshua 14:10-11, Caleb says, "And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in." So God gave Caleb remarkable strength and endurance. Joshua then gives Hebron to Caleb and you remember what was in Hebron—the giants: Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, the children of Anak. In the next chapter, Joshua 15:14 astonishingly says, "And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak." Don't forget, Caleb is now eighty-five years old. An eighty-five year old man drove out those very giants before whom two and a half million people trembled and said, "We can't go in." That is what God can do!

One of our deceased ministers said he once saw an old rickety truck going down a road in Nigeria with a crudely painted sign that read, "God plus one = majority." That's what Caleb experienced. "Him will I bring into the land" and him will I bless. God promises so much. He does "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). It would be great, wouldn't it, if God did everything we asked? Paul says He will do more. He will do everything you *ask* or *think*. That is truly great. No, Paul says, He will do more; He will do *above* what you ask or think. Even more, He will do *exceeding* above what you ask or think. Paul proceeds yet further; he breaks the boundaries of Greek grammar. He says the same word twice in Greek, which doesn't make grammatical sense, but Paul was carried away with the greatness of God's gracious promises. The King James Bible translates it, "he does *exceeding, abundantly*, above all that you ask or think."

Caleb, you are eighty-five; what do you think you are doing going into the

land? Caleb believes God; he enters the land and slays the giants. Oh, what a great God! Is your God like that?

I read a wonderful story some months ago of a little boy in Connecticut who was on his deathbed. George Whitefield visited him, and spoke to him about God and His way of salvation in Christ. The boy was converted. Some weeks later, his unbelieving father said to him, "Son, are you not afraid to die?" The boy said, "No, Daddy, I'm not afraid to die." His father said, "Why not?" The little boy said, "Because I am going to Mr. Whitefield's big God."

Whitefield made God look big. So did Caleb. Do you? Do you have a big God? Do you believe in Him—the God of promises? The world never gives what it promises; God never gives less than He promises. And He promises, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20).

Thirdly, God promises to give Caleb's descendants the land to possess, Caleb will have something to leave behind. He will leave a blessing to his children. We read in Joshua 15 that his children were blessed. The Lord is faithful as the covenant-keeping Jehovah to fulfil His promises "from generation to generation."

The only way to live blessedly is to follow God *fully*. To follow God out of grace, rooted in grace and rewarded by grace. To follow God unconditionally, trusting in His promises.

May I ask you: Do you follow God *fully*? Do you follow God at all? That is the first question, isn't it? As long as we are unrenewed, you see, we don't follow the Lord at all. We have only one brief lifetime to follow God. Samuel Rutherford said, "If I had a thousand souls, I wouldn't risk one of them outside of Jesus." You have but one soul and are you risking that soul outside of Jesus Christ? Don't do it! Don't destroy yourself; don't play games with God; don't keep on going your own way. Bow before the Most High. Surrender in repentance and faith at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. Seek His face. You and I either belong with the unbelieving spies or with the believing spies. By nature, we want to be among the popular majority, but by grace, God brings us into the despised minority. That is a blessed place to be! The God of Caleb still lives--seek grace to follow his example, no matter the cost, even if you are threatened with death. Follow God *fully*!

Remarkably, Caleb was not the one who died. He faced great dangers and great enemies, but God kept him. He lived to be an old man, but what happened to his enemies? The glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation and that very day God killed all ten false spies. Then, eventually, all the people aged twenty and higher died. Like Caleb, those who follow God fully by gracious faith, will live to see God's promises fulfilled as their exceeding great reward.

Pray for grace every day to follow God fully. God will bring those who follow Him into the heavenly land of Canaan to His glory and their comfort. Don't rest until you are assured, for Christ's sake, that you are among that happy throng. Amen.