

March 17, 2023 (Edited messages originally preached on March 22, 2015, and March 15, 2017)

## *I Still Want That Mountain*

Text – Joshua 14:6 - 15

Congregational Reading – Joshua 14:10 - 12

### Introduction

#### Read the text – Joshua 14:6 - 15

This morning, we will look at a Bible illustration of a man whose desire was to do God's will with all his heart. Caleb was a man who had a zeal for the Lord and the Lord's work as a young man, and that zeal did nothing but increase as he grew older. Caleb's heart was filled with a passion for serving the Lord. Three times in our text, the Bible records that Caleb **wholly followed the Lord.**

*"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deuteronomy 6:5)*

*"Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you." (1 Samuel 12:24)*

*"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;" (Colossians 3:23)*

*"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (Ecclesiastes 9:10)*

Caleb was 85 years old when he conquered Hebron for the Lord.

The Bible is full of examples of other older people who accomplished amazing things:

Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 when she gave birth to Isaac.

Moses was 80 when he was called by God to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt.

Joshua was 80 years old when he took over for Moses.

Daniel was over 80 years old when he was thrown into the lion's den.

Zacharias and Elizabeth were both "well stricken in years" when she gave birth to John the Baptist.

Anna was 84 and was serving the Lord with prayer and fasting when the Lord Jesus was presented in the temple.

Paul was “aged” but was still just as fervent in his service for the Lord.

History records countless achievement made by older people:

Benjamin Franklin signed the Declaration of Independence at 70 and remained active in American politics for years later.

Laura Ingalls Wilder whose books inspired the famous television series, Little House on the Prairie, did not begin writing until she was 64.

The famous architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, designed his masterpiece, the Guggenheim Museum when he was 90.

Colonel Sanders didn’t open his first Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant until he was 65.

Thomas Edison invented the telephone at 84.

At our church, we are blessed to have several men and women who are still fighting the battle for the Lord, even though they are in their retirement years. (illustrate - Bob Fenton).

In our text today, we read about this man Caleb who was still in the game, still fighting the Lord’s battles at the age of 85.

Let’s look at a contrast found a few chapters later in Joshua 17:14 – 18:

Here we see presumably the two half tribes complaining to Joshua regarding the portion of land that they received. They said it was too small. They said that they were far too “great” a people to be confined to such a small piece of land. Together, their population was 82,500, which was large. Manasseh had increased in size dramatically (by approximately 20,000 men) during their wandering in the Wilderness. Ephraim had decreased by 8,000 men.

- Joshua stated that what they had was enough, but they weren’t making the most of what they had.
- They would have to work for it.
- They would have to fight for it.

Many times, God’s people are dissatisfied with their lives, causing them to covet things that belong to somebody else. God wants us to appreciate what we have and make the most of what we have.

Don't covet somebody else's home – make the most of the home that God gave you.

Don't covet somebody else's marriage – work hard and fight to make yours the best it can be.

And if there is something out there that you want that is inside the will of God for you, like this mountain that Caleb wanted, go fight for it; work for it.

## I Caleb Was a Man of Great Faith When He Was Young

Turn to Numbers 13:1 – 3; 6; 17 – 33; 14:1 – 10; 14:20 – 24; 29 - 30

**A Caleb did not follow the crowd.**

**B Caleb respected and revered Moses, a much older man.**

*"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." (Proverbs 16:31)*

*"With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding." (Job 12:12)*

Young people would do very well to learn as much as you can from the older generation.

*"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5)*

Young ladies should learn from the older women.

*"The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." (Titus 2:3-5)*

## II Caleb Was a Men of Great Forbearance (Patience) When He Was Middle-aged

Because the people of Israel didn't trust God, God had to postpone their entrance into the Promised Land. Caleb did not get bitter at God or the people. He just continued to serve his Lord and the people of God. He waited 40 years while they wandered in the wilderness, and then he waited some more as they fought other battles when they first entered the Land.

*"For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth." (Psalm 37:9)*

*"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."  
(Isaiah 40:31)*

### **III Caleb's Faith Flourished When He Was Old**

At eighty-five, he was still fighting zealously for the Lord. He didn't retire to the easy chair. He was no longer fighting for his own benefit, but was fighting for the Lord, for his family, and for future generations.

*"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. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said." (Joshua 14:10-12)*

*"And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak." (Joshua 15:14)*

Caleb was still conquering mountains for the Lord at eighty-five; he was still in the battle. What is your excuse?

*"12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.  
13 Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.  
14 **They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;** 15 To shew that the LORD is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him."  
(Psalm 92:12-15)*

### **Conclusion**

**Young People** – Serve the Lord with Zeal and listen to the wisdom of your elders.

**Middle-Aged People** – Be patient. Don't get discouraged because you are still serving but maybe have not yet seen a great amount of fruit from your labors.

**Old Timers** – Don't put down your sword yet. Keep fighting for as long as you can. Work to mentor and train the next generation.

There may be some more mountains for you to conquer – don't retire from the Lord's work.

Illustration from *Our Daily Bread*

Old age is dreaded by almost everyone because it usually means loneliness, physical decline, and a retreat to inactivity. Some people tend to lose their enthusiasm for life and spend too much time in fruitless reminiscing and self-pity. They feel like "Old Jimmy", an elderly gentleman George Mueller often told about. When this man was asked what he did all day since he had retired, he replied, "I just sit and think, and sit and think, ... and sometimes I just sit!" That's getting old in the worst way -- ceasing to live before we die.

God never intends for us to retire from spiritual activity. The Bible says we can "still bring forth fruit in old age." Even as Jesus kept the "best wine" for the last at the wedding in Cana (John 2:10), so He seeks to gather the most luscious clusters of the fruit of the Spirit from the fully ripened harvest of our lives. You may be sure God wouldn't keep you on this earth if He didn't have a worthwhile ministry for you to accomplish. So, keep on serving the Lord!

Illustration from *Our Daily Bread*

The great evangelist George Whitefield was relating the difficulties of the gospel ministry to some friends. He said that he was weary of the burdens and was glad that his work would soon be over and that he would depart this earthly scene to be with Christ. The others admitted having similar feelings -- all except one, a Mr. Tennant. Noting this, Whitefield tapped him on the knee and said, "Well, Brother Tennant, you are the oldest among us; do you not rejoice to think that your time is so near at hand when you will be called Home?"

The old man answered bluntly that he had no wish about it. When pressed for something more definite, he added, "I have nothing to do with death. My business is to live as long as I can, and as well as I can, and serve my Savior as faithfully as I can, until He thinks it's time to call me Home." Whitefield accepted that word as a gentle rebuke from the Lord, and it helped him go on with his work calmly and patiently.

**TRIBAL DISTRIBUTION OF PALESTINE**

- City
- ▲ Mountain
- ▨ Territory shared by the tribes of Judah and Simeon

0 15 30 Miles  
0 15 30 Kilometers

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

