

A Faithful Servant - Joshua 14v1-15

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[0 : 0 0] folks. Nice to be back with you again. Turn with me, please, to Joshua chapter 14. Joshua 14. And over the—I think this is now the third time I've preached to you. The past two messages were very much an encouragement in your own walk with the Lord, in your own devotional life.

This morning I bring before you a challenge as we walk with the Lord, as we serve Him, wherever He has placed us. Let's just read this together, and then we'll pray, and then we'll look at this passage together. Joshua chapter 14.

This is the division of the land as they are about to kind of conquer the land that God's promised them. They've wandered for 40 years, and now the land is about to be divided up. So let's read from verse 1. Now these are the areas that Israelites received as an inheritance in the land of Canaan, which Eliezer the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the heads of the tribal clans of Israel allotted to them. Their inheritances were assigned by lot to the nine and a half tribes, as the Lord had commanded through Moses. Moses had granted the two and a half tribes their inheritance east of the Jordan, but had not granted the Levites an inheritance among the rest, for Joseph's descendants had become two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. The Levites received no share of the land, but only towns to live in, with pasture lands for their flocks and herds. So the Israelites divided the land just as the Lord had commanded Moses. Now the people of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, said to him, You know what the Lord said to Moses, the man of God at Kadesh Bernea, about you and me? I was 40 years old when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me from Kadesh Bernea to explore the land, and I brought him back a report according to my convictions. But my fellow Israelites who went up with me made the hearts of the people sink. I, however, followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly.

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.

Now then, just as the Lord promised, he has kept me alive for 45 years, since the time he said this to Moses, while Israel moved about in the wilderness. So here I am today, 85 years old. 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.

[2 : 5 2] Now give me this hill country that the Lord promised me that day. You yourself heard 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. Then Joshua blessed Caleb, son of Jephunneh, and gave him Hebron as his inheritance.

So Hebron has belonged to Caleb, son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, ever since, because he followed the Lord, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly. Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba, after Arba, who was the greatest man among the Anakites. Then the land had rest from war. We'll end our reading at the end of this chapter. Let's come before God. Let's ask for His help as we seek to study this together.

Our loving Heavenly Father, we just still ourself in Your presence this morning. We do indeed thank You for all that's gone before us to this point in their service. We thank You for the songs that we've been singing. We thank You that You have placed a new song in our heart, even praise unto God. You have called us. You have changed us. We are Yours. It's well with our soul. And Lord, we are on that pilgrimage to that celestial city. And Lord, You know that the things that befall us, the temptations that befall us to seek a life of ease, perhaps, and to take our foot off the gas, and to not to follow our Savior as well as we should. Father, we pray as we consider the life of Your godly servant of all, Caleb. We pray, Father, that he might challenge us. We pray, Lord, that we might be empowered, that we might be those disciples who are better disciples, Lord, who follow Jesus well,

who live a life worthy of the gospel. So, Father, just bless us. Close us in with Your words. Speak to us. We pray.

Pray, Father, that the Holy Spirit, Lord, would use the preaching of Your word for the upbuilding of Your people. So, Father, encourage us. Be to us all that we need, Lord, in these moments. And we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. I wonder if you recognize any of these names. These names, unless you knew your Bible, they're pretty obscure names. I've taken off two names, and you probably guess, based on the reading, who these men are. If you stick up the other two names, then you would guess. They were the spies who went to spy out the land of Canaan. Two of them are well-known.

The rest of them are nobodies who went to spy. They were heads of their tribe in their day. They were important people, but they went to spy out the land of Canaan. And as you know, if you know your Bible, they brought a bad report. The Lord says, go in and take the land. You will surely take it. I've given it to you. They went in and said, it's too difficult. It's just too difficult. And we wish we'd died here. We wish the Lord had never redeemed us. Doom and gloom. If it was Dad's army, we're doomed Captain Manning. That was the report, basically, that they brought back. Except for Joshua and Caleb, two names that have remained throughout the Old Testament. In fact, I know people called Joshua, and Caleb. I don't know anybody called after the other ten. And there's a lesson there. These people, these two men are godly men. And we're going to look at Caleb this morning. I remember a number of years ago, I discovered something about myself that I never quite realized. I was just a young engineer. I was working for a company in Motherwell, and I left that company to go to a bigger company in Glasgow. And after I was in this company, I decided to go back and visit my mates back in Motherwell and that firm. And we were standing around the desk, just chatting, just about life and so forth. And there was a young guy there. I'd never met him before. He transpired he was an apprentice. And he must have come after I had left. And he said something. In fact, he must have been near when I was there because he says, John, I'm going to the company that you work for in Glasgow.

[7:19] And I went, really? He says, yeah, I'm about to finish up here and go to the company you went to. And I says, oh, really? And he says something which disturbed me a bit. He says, I looked at you and saw you were ambitious. And because of that, he basically resigned to follow me to this other company. I remember thinking, wow, that's a brave thing to do. First of all, you don't know me.

Secondly, the company isn't greener on the other side. It wasn't that great after all. But it's the fact that this young man I never knew looked at me, saw him as ambitious, and decided to bring his life to mirror mine in some way. And I found that quite unnerving. I must confess, I thought, wow, I hope that works out okay for him. I felt as if I had one disciple and he's been led astray.

And it was a bit scary. I wonder what people would say about you. I wonder what your reputation is. If people look at you, do they think you're ambitious? He or she, you're ambitious, you're driven, you're keen, or you're a family man, you're a godly man, you like a good laugh or whatever.

However, Francis's funeral will be coming up. I have no doubt, I don't know the man. No doubt they will say many good things about him. Funerals are often a time when we say nice things about people. They were like this. This is the type of person they were. They were faithful. They were regular. They were godly men or godly women. I wonder, as you sit there this morning, what people would say about you? What would they think about you? You're a hard worker? You're faithful? Or whatever. It's a question that's worth asking. Most people today are driven by something. Usually, it's earthly things. Their family, their job, their house, their car. They want to get on. They're driven by many temporal things. And there's nothing wrong in that. But if that is your reputation, and it's only in the things here and now, and your life doesn't have that eternal perspective, then perhaps you're missing out in a big way. This morning, I want us to look at the life of Caleb.

Caleb was a man, and we read it in the passage, who served the Lord wholeheartedly. That was the type of man he was. And I want us to look at that. It's good to look at his life. So I want to go through this fairly quickly. I've called this a faithful servant. That's who he was. If that's how you would describe him, I want to be called that. And the day when I die and somebody stands up, he was a faithful servant. I wonder if you could say with your hand in your heart, that's how people would describe you. You're a faithful servant of the Lord. This was a sermon I preached a number of years ago at a church in Matlock. And Matlock's a great place. I commend it to you if you've never been in Derbyshire. Strange place, but it's a nice place. And they gave me this passage because they were working through this. And I don't usually try and alliterate my sermons and have

all the same letters. I just, I don't put any effort into that really. If it comes, it comes. I don't force it. But in this sermon, I managed to come up with an acronym, which I felt was faithful to the passage. So that's what we're going to five-point sermon. F-A-I-T-H. We're going to look at faith, his faith, and to use that to examine your faith. So first of all then, the focus of his faith.

[10:59] Abraham was a man of God. He took God at his word. He wasn't just a nice guy, a good guy, a loving guy. He was a man of faith. But faith in God's word particularly. If God said it, he believed that God would do it. He took God at his word. Now, God had already worked in the people of Israel.

His word came to them. He told them to move out of Egypt and so forth. They were a chosen people. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob have chosen you. He communicated this to them. You are my chosen people. He rescues them out of Egypt from slavery. He wants to bless them into a land flowing with milk and honey. And he enters into a covenant with them. Walk with me and you will be blessed. Disobey me and you will be cursed. And that is how God has dealt with his people up until Caleb arrives on the scene.

Caleb knows this. And more than that, Caleb believes in what God has done and what God has said. And they had to trust God. Ever since the Lord brought them out of Egypt, they had to walk in faith. But they had to trust in the Lord that the Lord would love them. The Lord would care for them. He would lead them and guide them. He wanted what was best for them. And part of this was to take them into a land where they would be blessed. It was as simple as that. And you know the story well.

Numbers 13. You're welcome to look at that. Just flick through if you want or just listen. You remember Moses. Sent them to explore the land of Canaan. Go up through the Negev. This is Numbers 13, 17. See what the land is like. And whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many.

[12:53] What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they walled or unwalled? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are the trees on it or not? Quite a detailed kind of thing that they had to do. Check out the trees. Check out the walls. Check out all these things. And do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land, for it's a season for the first ripe grapes. So, they went up and explored the land. And then, in Numbers 13, 26, you know the story well. They returned with a report. They gave Moses this account. We went into the land of which you sent us. It does flow with milk and honey. Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful. And the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there.

In other words, they saw what the land was like, a true representation. But their faith began to crumble. It's too difficult for us. And then, two men stood up, Caleb and Joshua. And they brought a different report. Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and says, we should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it. But the men who had gone up with him said, we can't attack those people. They are stronger than we are. And then, when you go into Numbers 14, verse 1 and 2, it's a whole night of boo-hooing. The people weep. They are just so downcast. That night, all the people of the community raised their voices, wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron. And the whole assembly said to them, if only we had died in Egypt or in this desert. Wow. You can't get more discouraged or more depressed than that. If only we'd died there and never come out or even just die here. In other words, I just want to die. It's as simple as that.

The problem is too big. God is too small. He cannot deliver. And only two men said, we should go in. We can take this. It's quite something. It really is quite something. I wonder if you're that person, if you're the if-only person that says, if only it was like this in Westerhales Baptist Church, then it would all be great. But it's not like that. It's like this. We're doomed Captain Manning.

I must confess, I'm a bit more pessimistic. For me, the glass is always half full. I'm just that type of person. And I'm constantly saying, but Lord, you can do this. Maybe you're a glass half full person or a glass half empty. For me, it's always, oh dear, if only it was a bit fuller. If only the glass was 75 percent, then we could maybe achieve something. And maybe you're sitting here this morning, pastorless, thinking, if only this was the case, then life would be so much better. If only your life was such a way, your pension was better, your health was better, your kids were better behaved, and so forth. If only this was the case, life would be better. Caleb and Joshua, they faced the situation as it is, but they trusted in God, God and His Word. And they took God at His Word. The Lord loves it when people trust in Him. Even though they have a right view of the situation, but they trust in Him,

moving. They take God at His Word. I will never leave you nor forsake you.

And you know what happened to them. The Lord in Numbers 14 says, not one of them who saw my glory will enter into this land, except for two men, Joshua and Caleb. It's quite something. Even Moses and Aaron don't get to go into the promised land, but these two guys do. It really is quite something.

[17 : 10] But because my servant, Numbers 14, 24, 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.

No one of you will enter the land, I swore, except Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua, son of Nun. This is mentioned again in Deuteronomy. The Lord is playing. I'm going to bless this person because he trusts in me. The promise is believed by Caleb. And now, 45 years later, which is Joshua 14, this was said to him 45 years ago. He was 40 at the time. He's now 85 years old.

And he's clung to this word all the time through the wilderness. And he comes. In verse 6 of Joshua 14, the men of Judah approach Joshua at Gilgal, Caleb, son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite. He was of the tribe of Judah. He's the first tribe to come to claim their inheritance. But he's first in the queue.

Caleb comes and says, you know, Joshua, you know what the Lord said to Moses, a man of God, about you and about me, basically. Remember Joshua. Remember it was only you and I. You remember what the Lord says. He's simply stating to Joshua, remember God's word through Moses that I would be given an inheritance, that I would be given land. And he's basically coming to cash that in. When everybody's dividing up the land, he's coming and saying, you know that I was promised land. God said it, and I've come to claim this now. Joshua 14, 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. Here is somebody who's taking God at his word, who trusts in God. What is God's word to us this morning? What does he promise us? Ultimately, we too are promised a land of milk and honey. We are promised a new kingdom, a place in heaven in glory. Jesus himself said this, in my father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come back and take you to be with myself. I wonder as a Christian, when you first hear the gospel, you thrill at eternal life.

You thrill at heaven. You thrill at walking with the Savior who loved you and died for you. But as you go through life, whether it's 45 years since the day you were saved, you can work it out. I was saved, and I'm 62. 42 years I've been a Christian. And that can become dull. It can become, the shine can come off of that. And life can all be about sore knees and sore backs and bruise and paracetamol and antidepressants, and life is just hard. And we are not always rejoicing and looking forward to that land of milk and honey. And we wonder whether the Lord will sustain us and keep us there.

[20 : 34] We have been saved from so much. We have passed from eternal condemnation to eternal life. These are real promises. I used to have a wee book by Horatius Boner that I used to just dig out now and again. It was just called The Promises of God. You used to get promise boxes, didn't you? A wee pair of tweezers, pick it out, open it up. That's the verse for you, which is good. But you have a whole book of promises, don't you? Are they ever real to you? Do you claim them? Do you walk in them? Do they thrill you? Do they keep you going Monday to Sunday? You have said, God, I believe you. I trust in you. This is what I'm going to do. Do they excite you? Do they drive you on? Are you known as a person of faith? Life is hard for so-and-so, but they seem to rise above it. They seem to have this hope and there's confidence in God. Is that what people would say to you? Are you a Caleb-type person?

Must have been hard for him for 40-odd years in the wilderness when they're all saying doom and gloom, that he's like Abraham looking for a city whose architect and foundation is God. He knew what would lay ahead, and that's what drove him on. I wonder if you're John Lorry, not John Lorry, we're doomed, Captain Manning type of person, or whether he says, life is hard, but I take God at his word daily, and I trust in him, and I claim the promises of God. So, that was Caleb. His focus was on God and his word. Is that you? Secondly, A, the allegiance of his faith. By this I mean his wholeheartedness. It was said often of Caleb in the passages that he didn't just serve the Lord, he served the Lord wholeheartedly. It's quite something, not half-heartedly, not every now and again when the wind's blowing in the right direction. Wholeheartedly, whatever came his way, he served the Lord with his whole heart. You see this in Joshua 14, 8 and 9,

I, however, followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly. That was his reputation. He even said it about himself. That's quite something to say about yourself. I don't know if I can say that. I have followed the Lord wholeheartedly. If you're here this morning, and maybe you've been coming to Western Hales or other churches for many years, faithful at the prayer meeting, turning up, serving the Lord, serving the Lord wholeheartedly. And that was why he was given the land. He served the Lord wholeheartedly. He was like Abraham of old, driven by this new place. And his faithfulness was towards God over 45 years of waiting on the promise to be fulfilled. It's quite something. It really is quite something. Our salvation, we cannot earn our salvation. But once we are saved, it's being in London, I remember one of the things that I encountered that I never really encountered elsewhere was people professing faith, usually Iranians, funny enough. And they knew how to play the game, and I was rather naive. If you put Christianity Explored on, they would often sit and go. And they look at you, do you see I'm watching the telly here, and isn't God great? And they said the right stuff. And basically what they wanted to do was, they come from Iran, come from another country perhaps, settled, wanted to settle in the UK, and they knew the only way to do that was to profess faith.

[24 : 20] They had to say they became a Christian because they wouldn't be sent back. And I had to discuss a lot of things with the home office, a lot of other pastors did. And it was hard to try and evaluate, is this person really a Christian, or are they just playing the system? And one of the ways to do this wasn't had they gone through Christianity Explored and just went, I love Jesus. It was the Lord in their heart.

Did they talk about the Lord? Did they pray to the Lord? Not because it was a duty, like Islam. It was a change had been brought about in their life. And you looked for that. You just looked for them talking about, isn't Jesus great? And you can't manufacture that. And that's what you looked for. And that is what drives people on. That is what you wanted from them. Not turning up at the prayer meeting because when the home office asked me if they were a Christian, I'd say, well, they come to the prayer meeting, and they go approved, and they get to stay in the country. But mostly because you knew God had done a work. They weren't their own workmanship. They were God's workmanship.

As a Christian, we cannot earn salvation, but there are rewards. There are Christians that are more committed than other Christians. As a pastor, you want everybody to be the same. You want everybody to serve the Lord wholeheartedly. The simple truth is it doesn't often happen. Some Christians are full on 25 hours a day Christians serving the Lord, and others less so. You sometimes find that in big churches. It's very easy. I couldn't pastor a very big church. I think it would frustrate me.

If too many people sat, just warmed the pew, saved and singing, and that's it. Not saved and serving. There's a big difference. And it's great when we're able to serve the Lord in that way. We will hear, well done, thou good and faithful servant, like Caleb. If we are not only saved but serving the Lord, our allegiance is to him. There was a debate years ago, could we accept Jesus as Savior? [26 : 29] Savior, but not Lord. I don't believe you can. He has to be both. If he really is your Savior, he will be your Lord. And your desire should be to follow him. And that is what the early church did.

There was a verse that I used to quote all the time in London during the time I was there. The early church devoted themselves. Remember on the 3,000, Acts 2 and so forth, 42, they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the breaking of bread, fellowship, and prayer. The word devoted is such a big thing. There is too much easy believism. Well, I prayed the prayer. I'm a Christian. But I'm not serving the Lord wholeheartedly. There is no other way to serve the Lord other than to be wholehearted.

And like the early church, may it be our desire to serve him wholeheartedly. It's very hard to do this. It must have been so hard for Joshua and Caleb to swim against the tide. That's what it means to serve the Lord wholeheartedly. Christianity today is often one of convenience. Well, I'll do this. I remember in one church, it was just such a close-knit community. It didn't take much for people to not come to meetings and so forth. If it was, I remember one excuse. What was it? I can't come to the prayer meeting. It's the anniversary of my grandmother's death. And I'm thinking, really?

That keeps you away from the prayer meeting. You could write a book on excuses about why we don't serve the Lord wholeheartedly. That one was, let the dead bury their own death. You come with the living and pray for the church. And it's that. Can you say that about yourself? Caleb said that about himself. I have served the Lord wholeheartedly. Others said that. Would people say that

about you, serving the Lord? Are you very driven in your faith? Does it show itself in service? Are you serving the Lord in some way in the local church? Thirdly, insight into faith. Caleb knew that if he had to inherit the land, he needed God's help. It's not all down to you. Look at me, Lord. I'm serving wholeheartedly. I'm doing fine, Lord. I don't need your help. Caleb acknowledged. Look at verse 10.

[28 : 59] Now then, just as the Lord promised, he has kept me alive 45 years since the time he said this to Moses. So here I am today, 85 years old. He acknowledged that he's got to where he is, not because he's looked after himself with multivitamins and worked out at the gym. God kept him alive. If you're here this morning, and whatever age you are, God has kept you alive this number of years. He has done this. He's done this for a purpose. He's done this for a reason. Do you see that? If you have a pulse, it's because you have a work to do. And here is basically Caleb recognizing that God was at work.

I remember many years ago, I was out walking, and for some reason, my spiritual birthday was coming up May the 12th. That's my spiritual birthday. And for whatever reason, I started to work out how long I'd been a Christian. And at that point, I was just about to become a Christian more than I had been a non-Christian. So I must have been about 40, because I became a Christian when I was about 20. And you have no idea how much that thrilled me. And the verse in Peter, kept by the power of God, really thrilled me. Suddenly, I had been in the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of the wicked one. I'd been translated into the kingdom of God, the kingdom of his son. And suddenly, the balances began to swing. I was a Christian more than a non-Christian, and that thrilled me. I'm sure most of you here may be being a Christian a lot longer than you've been a non-Christian. That's something to rejoice in.

God has kept you, and he's brought you here on March the 19th, 2023, on this Mothering Sunday, because he has kept you. And he recognized that. It wasn't just his faith. He was kept by the power of God. If he had faith, it was God who gave him this faith. God who, for you, has taken away your heart of stone and given you a heart of flesh. That is God. God called you. God chose you. God poured his Holy Spirit in you. God empowered you. He led and guided you. Should that not thrill you, that you are kept by the power of God? Fourthly, the tenacity of his faith.

He's an 85-year-old octogenarian, and he's as tough as old boots. I just like him. You can almost see him there with his walking stick, saying to the youngsters, away you go, you bunch of young whippersnappers. If I come over there, I'll show you something. That's basically what he's like here. He speaks in a way that he appears far younger than he is. The language he's using here. Look at verse 10. Now then, just as the Lord promised, he has kept me alive for 45 years. So here I am today, 85 years old. I am still as strong today as the day of Moses sent me out. I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then. He's not taking his life easy. He's not saying. I remember saying to Lucille when we had money in London, and I thought, what do we do? Do we plow loads of money into the pension? What do we do? And I said, you know, I'd rather love life a bit and go on holidays and do whatever, rather than sitting at Musselboro Harbor with a blanket across your legs and just looking out and thinking, well, you've got strength. Use it to serve the Lord. And that is what he's doing. He's not saying, well, you know, I'm 85, joint Sunday working. I'm seeing the doctor next [32 : 48] Wednesday and so forth. He's as rugged as he was when he was 45. And he's deliberately saying that. Don't look at me, I'm 85. He says, well, we'll not give him any land. He's about to pop his clogs.

Well, he's entitled to land. He's had faith. He's pressed on. He's a man of God. And he's not afraid. And even the battles here. How does this finish? In Joshua 15, from Hebron, this is verse 14 of Joshua 15, Caleb drove out the three Anakites and their name to you. From there, he marched against the people. This is not just rhetoric. He really, the Lord has given him energy to keep pressing on.

He's not just saying, I'm a tough watch me. And you go, yeah, of course, yeah. You just sit down, do the crossword. You'll be fine, Caleb. He really, he's up for this. He's up for the battle. He gives himself to this. It is quite something. Three times he talks about, now, give me. Now, then. If that's the case, look at verse 12. He's not asking for the hill country sheepishly.

He says, give me. I am entitled to this. I'm fighting. I'm prepared to take you outside and fight you. This is mine. And he's a fighting octogenarian, and he wants this. He's presented a case for himself, a logical case, and he's done this. I want to recommend a book to you. I don't know, has anybody read this book by Gordon MacDonald, A Resilient Life? I commend this to you. If you ever buy

books, I buy most of my books from ICM books direct. They're from Northern Ireland. They're cheaper than Amazon. They're by far the best for buying Christian books. Anyway, A Resilient Life. In this book, he talks about older people serving the Lord in the early chapters. And he says that the second half of your life should be more fruitful than the first half, because you've been round the block.

You've done the marathon of life. You know what's expected. I had the privilege of working with young pastors to be in London from Oak Hill and from London Seminary. I admired their zeal and their sharpness of their mind, but their naivety made me laugh half the time. I say, is that what you think the ministry is like? You're in for a rude awakening, brother. And whereas you're not naive, you've been through so you've seen life, death, everything. You have so much to give to the next generation.

[35 : 25] Your latter half, as he said, should be more productive than the first half. I wonder if you believe that, Caleb would have said, amen, brother, I'm out fighting. I'm doing whatever I can do, whatever strengths I've got, I will use that for the service of the Lord. It's a good wee book to read. It's a very easy read, because the chapters in it are very good about not quitting. It's about finishing well, to finish life well, not just to fizzle out, but to finish well. Resilient people have a sense of life direction, and so forth. They cultivate Christian character. They listen for the call of God. They understand the importance of repairing the past, of practicing repentance, quick to forgive, overflowing with gratitude. Resilient people prepare themselves for the emergencies of life, keep themselves physically fit, work in their minds. It's good chapters. I commend it to you, The Resilient Life by Mr. McDonald. I commend that to you. When you get older, it's easy to think, well, if only in our church we had a bunch of 25-year-olds, then the work would go. I praise the Lord for people who are older. They pray well. And that's what transforms churches. Whatever your right hand finds to do, do that with all your might. In one of the churches I was in, we did a course from London Institute of Contemporary Christianity. I don't know if you know them. Their stuff's pretty good, called Life on the Frontline. And it's a good tire-hits-the-road course about just how to live the gospel in wherever you are. Not necessarily work, can be work, but in the post office or whatever it is. And after we did this course, or we just started it, a bunch of our older folk who were doctors and lawyers, they were all smart cookies. And they were heard to say in the car park, we don't have a front line, they said. We're in the departure lounge. That was how they viewed themselves. And I couldn't help but feel wishing they were in the departure lounge, truth be told. The departure lounge is you lying in your bed, hooked up to your monitor. That's the departure lounge. If you can walk into this church and talk and meet people, you have a front line. You are not rusting. I hope that is not your attitude. See, when I was 25, you should have seen me then, pastor, but I'm just in the departure lounge. Caleb never seen himself in the departure lounge. You are not in the departure lounge. You have a front line. And may the Lord lead you and guide you in this.

Young people, this sounds as if it's just for older folk, but young folk. I remember listening to a sermon by John Piper many years ago, and in it he talked about adolescence. Adolescence is a relatively new word to the English language. It's that wacky period between like 15 and 20 or whatever, when you just want to pickle your kids and bring them out when they're 25. It's a messy period. They're not quite adults, but they're not children. They're this thing in between. They're adolescent, but their spots and their voice breaking and trying to find out who they are. There was a time years ago when young folk grew up ever so fast. When you used to be 14 and they fired you up a chimney, couldn't clean that, or you went down the pits. Mining communities, you left school at 16, you got a job.

Now young folk go away to discover themselves. They grow up when they're 30, after they've played Call of Duty and they've done this and they've gone to Kathmandu to discover who they are, and they wander around. And you just want to say to them, get a job. Wise up. Sober up. Grow up. Get yourself a holy ambition. What is your ambition? John Piper, it was a 31st of December, big talk to loads of folk. And that was basically, he says, what is your ambition? Is it to get a career? Is it to do this? Is it to eventually grow up? And he told us an illustration about trying to teach his kids, his daughter chess. And instead of playing chess, she had them married off, the wee pieces, and stuff like that. Ask young folk for you. Instead of doing what needs to be done.

If any young folk are listening to this, time to grow up at times. Don't wait till you're 30, or to your 40. Years ago, you had to man up and you had to do the right thing. Not the thing. Years ago, it used to be, I'll do it if I enjoy it. Our duty, when you're younger, you do it because you have to do it. But if I

enjoy it, I'll do it. If I'm convinced, I'll do it. There are things we have to do because it's our duty. Get yourself a holy ambition. And don't wait till you're 40.

Lastly, heritage of faith. Tenacity. Heritage of faith. By this, I mean legacy. What benefit are you to others? Others could have seen Caleb for 45 years. He must have been a great example to it. Every morning, wakes up, sees these people here. And it must have been hard. I've got 45 years of misery. Not because of me, but because of you. Because it's your fault I'm doing this. Every week, every day, I have to wake up for 45 years. I was figuring into that. I would be whining and dining. [41 : 07] But because of you, it's very easy to become cynical, if only. But he pressed on. And he must have been a great example to others. Look at Joshua. Look at Caleb. They keep going on. They're tenacious.

And this would have been an example to others. But also, others benefited from his faith. And with this, I'll close. If you read into Joshua 15, there's the account with his daughter. He's got the land. And he's able to dish this land out to members of his family. And his daughter, one day, when she, his daughter, came to Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for a field. She got off her donkey. This is Joshua 15, 18. Caleb asked her, what can I do for you? She replied, do me a special favor. Since you have given me land in the Negev, give me also springs of water. So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs. If Caleb wasn't a man of God, he could have given her nothing. He couldn't have blessed his family. But because he put God first, and God blessed him, the blessings that he received spilled out to others. Here's a \$64,000 question. Is your family better for you being a

Christian? Are they, what legacy are you leaving them? Do they see you and think, I would have done this, but I watched so-and-so, and they've challenged me. I want to be like them. And is God blessing your family through you? As he blesses you, as you serve him wholeheartedly, is your family being blessed?

That's quite something, isn't it? It's great if your family ever quote you, or just know that you're godly. Not weird, but you're godly. And they aspire, or they are blessed. They see the blessings in the family because of you. That is quite something. What legacy are you leaving? Is it just your piano, or the crystal vase, or whatever? Or are you leaving a spiritual legacy? That's the \$64,000 question.

Here is a faithful servant who took God at his word, who served the Lord wholeheartedly, who recognized he needed God's help, who was tenacious, who wouldn't be blown off course, but was fighting at 85 as he was when he was 40. And at the same time, God was blessing others through him. May the Lord do that in your life and in my life. Let's stand and we'll sing together.

[43 : 48] I want to serve the purpose of God in my generation. Easy to sing, hard to mean. So let's stand and we'll sing this together. I want to serve the purpose of God in my generation. I want to serve the purpose of God, but I am a high.

Lord, I want to serve the purpose of God in my generation. I want to serve the purpose of God in the world. I want to serve the purpose of God in my generation. I want to serve the purpose of God in my generation. I want to serve my life. For something that will last forever. I delight, I delight to serve your way.

What is on your heart? Show me what to do. Let me know you're in and I will follow you.

I guess on your heart, it showed me what to do Let me know your will, and I will follow you I want to build a silver and gold in my generation I want to build a silver and gold where I am alive I want to give my life, for something's better and forever All of the lies, it's a lie to do your will What is on your heart, show me what to do Let me know your will, and I will follow you What is on your heart, show me what to do

Let me know your will, and I will follow you I want to see the kingdom of God in my generation I want to see the kingdom of God when I am alive I want to give my life, for something's better and forever All of the lies, would you like to do your will What is on your heart, show me what to do Let me know your will, and I will follow you What is on your heart, show me what to do Let me know your will, and I will follow you I want to see the Lord come again, my generation

[46 : 58] I want to see the Lord come again, when I am alive I want to see the kingdom of God in my day I want to hear the kingdom of God in my heart I want to see the kingdom of God in my heart I want to see the kingdom of God in my heart, so my Jesus Let me know your way, and I can follow you.

What is on your heart, show me what to do. Let me know your way, and I can follow you.

Please be seated, and we'll close in prayer. That was great, you sang very well. I pray the Lord will give you guys strength for many years. That was terrific. See, you'd be near the organ when it's pumping out.

You can feel the vibrations. You can't help but sing heartily. Let's just close this part of our service in prayer. Our loving Father, we remember the words of Jesus, that unless we deny yourself daily and take up our cross, we cannot call ourselves disciples.

We cannot say we are following you. But if we are disciples, we need to do that. And Father, we have considered what that means in part this morning, what it meant for Caleb, and what it might mean for us.

[48 : 31] We pray, Heavenly Father, that these things might become the reality of our life. And wherever our front line is, and whatever that our life looks like, that we might be found not only singing, but serving.

So Father, help us to devote ourselves to you, to your word, and to the cause of Christ in this place. And we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.