



**Big Idea:** You can have faith and believe God no matter what the circumstances are.

**Scriptures:** Hebrews 11:1-3 NIV, Numbers 13:25-33 NLT, Genesis 17:8 NLT, Numbers 14:22-24 NLT, Joshua 14:7-8 NLT, John 16:33 NLT, Deuteronomy 31:8

## INTRO

Have you ever been faced with a situation that seemed impossible? Maybe it was the circumstances you'd have to face along the way or maybe it was going against what everyone else wanted to do. There was a woman named Corrie ten Boom who lived during the time of the World War II holocaust. She and her family knew they could face death if they protected the Jewish people in their town. They also knew that the Jewish people should be protected and saved and what was happening to them was a horrific injustice. She and her family saved hundreds of lives. Eventually, they were sent to a concentration camp themselves because of their actions and when she was finally released, she was never bitter or angry. She continued to live a life of courageous faith and forgiveness until the day she died.

## TENSION

In the church world we use the word faith a lot. The author of Hebrews devoted a whole chapter to faith and even highlighted people in history who had great faith. I would like to read the first three verses of that chapter.

*"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." Hebrews 11:1-3 NIV*

In the next 37 verses, the author continued to praise people who had shown great faith.

## TRUTH

Tonight, we are starting a new series. I believe that it takes courage to have faith. When you think about what courage is, it's not the absence of fear. It's a firm determination to do something even when you are scared. There are tons of people in history that have risked their lives to do what God has asked them no matter how scared they were.

In this series, we're going to look at three separate people who lived out a courageous faith. We're going to look at true stories found in the Old Testament and how these three people made decisions that showed courage.

Moses was a prophet who helped free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. He led them away from Pharaoh and the Egyptians and towards Canaan, the land that God had promised them. In Numbers 13, we're told that Moses sent out 12 men. He picked one guy from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. He wanted them to go into Canaan, check it out, and report back all that they had seen. One of these men was Caleb.

When they returned from Canaan, they gave their report to Moses, Caleb and his friend, Joshua, gave a different report than the other men. I'd like to read what happened from the book of Numbers.

*"After exploring the land for forty days, the men returned to Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran. They reported to the whole community what they had seen and showed them the fruit they had taken from the land. This was their report to Moses: "We entered the land you sent us to explore, and it is indeed a bountiful country—a land flowing with milk and honey. Here is the kind of fruit it produces. But the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak! The Amalekites live in the Negev, and the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country. The Canaanites live along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and along the Jordan Valley." But Caleb tried to quiet the people as they stood before Moses. "Let's go at once to take the land," he said. "We can certainly conquer it!" But the other men who had explored the land with him disagreed. "We can't go up against them! They are stronger than we are!" So they spread this bad report about the land among the Israelites: "The land we traveled through and explored will devour anyone who goes to live there. All the people we saw were huge. We even saw giants there, the descendants of*

*Anak. Next to them we felt like grasshoppers, and that's what they thought, too!" Numbers 13:25-33 NLT*

All twelve men saw the same bountiful land and the same people that lived there. Caleb said, "let's take the land" and everyone else (except for Joshua) said, "No way, the people are giants and so much stronger than us." While they had all experienced the same circumstances, while 10 of the men were afraid, Caleb (and Joshua) had courage and faith. This brings me to our first point:

## **APPLICATION**

### **1. Have faith regardless of the circumstances.**

The Israelites were all descendants of Abraham. And about 400 years before Moses, God made a promise to Abraham. He said,

*And I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants. It will be their possession forever, and I will be their God." Genesis 17:8 NLT*

If you were an Israelite, you knew about this promise. Moses and the twelve men he sent into Canaan all knew the promise God had made. All twelve of those men saw the same land. And all twelve knew that God's promises were greater than the strength of the Canaanites. However, only Caleb and Joshua thought they should take the land.

The people that lived in Canaan were giants. However, Caleb knew what God had promised.

How could he be so confident that they'd succeed? It's because his courage wasn't reckless or foolish. His faith was courageous because they believed that God would help them defeat the inhabitants of Canaan.

### **2. You can trust God's promises even when it doesn't seem possible.**

I'm sure the thought of invading a place with giants was really scary. This was a settled nation and the Israelites were nomads. It probably seemed like they didn't stand a chance at taking this land.



**Big Idea:** We are with God and God is with us.

**Scripture:** Joshua 1:9, Numbers 14:22-23 NLT, Matthew 5:3-10 NLT, Matthew 20:25-28 NLT, Joshua 5:13-15 NLT, Joshua 24:15 NLT

- Have you ever done something because everyone else was doing it? If you're comfortable, would you share?
- Why do you think that it's hard to do something different than what everyone else is doing?
- Is it hard for you to wait on God's timing? Why or why not?
- We learned that God uses different strategies than we do. Read the beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-10. Pick one or two and discuss what you think that means with the group.
- How does it make you feel when you hear God is not on a side?
- How does it make you feel when you hear God's promise in Joshua 1:9?
- Knowing we are called to lead by serving (Matthew 20:25-28), what is one thing you can do in the next week to serve someone else, even if it requires courage to bring the Kingdom to the people around you?

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