Lessons From Caleb – Part 3

I. Since the beginning of 2021, I’ve sensed the Lord calling us to draw strength and courage from the two Hebrew spies, Joshua and Caleb. (Num. 13:30) (Num. 14:24) J

A. It took them forty years, but they eventually took possession of the “promised land”. Today, as believers, we’ve been drafted into an army to take possession of a “land of promises”.

B. The word “possess” in Num 13:30 meant something most of the Israelites didn’t understand. It is also a meaning I believe most of the church today doesn’t fully understand. In Hebrew, the word “possess” literally means “to dispossess the current occupants” In other words, they had to be ready for war, and so do we.

C. When I talk about possessing land today, I’m thinking of two kinds: internal and external. “Internal” is areas in our heart that need to come under the rule of Jesus. “External” is things outside of us that need to come under the rule of Jesus.

II. The word “Caleb” in Hebrew means “*a dog*”. Back then, names had meaning. The following are three more lessons for us from Caleb, and how they relate to a dog’s life.

A. ***DISCERNING*** -- Dogs have an incredible sense of smell. There’s an interesting book called Blind Courage, about a blind man who relied on his dog named Orient.

This is what the author says about dogs: *“When it comes to priority of senses, Orient got information from his nose first, his ears second, and his eyes last....walking by scent and not by sight.”*

 ***2 Cor. 5:7 For we walk by faith (scent) and not by sight.***

***Heb. 5:14* *...But solid food belongs to those who are [***[***c***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+5&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-30045c)***]of full age, that is, those who by reason of [***[***d***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+5&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-30045d)***]use*** (practice) ***have their senses trained to discern both good and evil***.

a. There is a difference between “discernment” and “suspicion”. (2 Tim. 2:22) (Rom. 12:9)

b. I believe we can sharpen our discernment by practice. (Heb 5:4) Three main examples of how we can sharpen our discernment are: attending services, home groups, and the prayer room.

B. ***NEVER DROPS OUT*** – I think of the word “dogged” when it comes to Caleb. There is a higher quality to “dogged” than the dictionary definitions. For a Christian, God has called us to have “dogged courage”, “dogged faith”. That’s what Caleb had.

 a. Collins dictionay: *absolutely determined, willful or tenacious*

 b. Webster’s dictionary: *marked by stubborn determination*

***Heb. 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the***

***will of God, you may receive the promise.***

C. ***WAITS*** – Some think it just takes faith to enter the promises. It’s not enough to have faith, we have to have faith AND patience.

***Heb. 6:12 Do not become [***[***e***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+6&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-30057e)***]sluggish (lazy) ,but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.***

a. It takes time to develop character. I believe the Lord is much more interested in character than He is the gifts. You can receive a wonderful gift, but it doesn’t change your character one bit. There is no instant character development.

b. You can train a dog to follow, but it’s much more difficult to train a dog to wait. The same is true for Christians. We have to be trained **to follow** Jesus, but it takes much more training **to wait** upon Jesus.

c. When you’ve reached a certain maturity in the Christian life, God will say “now wait here.” And He won’t tell you why or how long, or what He’s going to do. He just wants to see if you’re trained, or if you will scamper off to someone or something that’s not your owner.

III. Video of a dog who waited for his owner for five days while he was in the hospital. He had lost contact with his owner.

A. As believers, we can lose contact with our Owner. Our relationship with Him isn’t like it we used to have with Him. Jesus purchased us with His own blood, and we are not our own.

B. If you have lost contact with Jesus, you can come back to Him today. You may feel like you’ve gone 20 steps away from Jesus, but the way back is just one step. Ask Him to forgive you, and re-dedicate your life to Him. (Rom. 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10)