

"The Minority Report"  
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"The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel. From each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a chief among them." So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, according to the command of the LORD, all of them men who were heads of the people of Israel." (Numbers 13:1-3)

"Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan and said to them, "Go up into the Negeb and go up into the hill country, and see what the land is, and whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, and whether the land that they dwell in is good or bad, and whether the cities that they dwell in are camps or strongholds, and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. Be of good courage and bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes. So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, near Lebo-hamath. They went up into the Negeb and came to Hebron. Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) And they came to the Valley of Eshcol and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster of grapes, and they carried it on a pole between two of them; they also brought some pomegranates and figs. That place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster that the people of Israel cut down from there. At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. They brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us. It flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan. But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it." Then the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are." So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, "The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them." (Numbers 13:17-33)

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According to Deuteronomy 1:21-22 (ESV) ("See, the LORD your God has set the land before you. Go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has told you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' Then all of you came near me and said, 'Let us send men before us, that they may explore the land for us and bring us word again of the way by which we must go up and the cities into which we shall come.'"), the children of Israel are standing on the very edge of the Promised Land and they now want to see if the land is truly "flowing with milk and honey" which God had promised them back in Exodus 3:8. They, in effect, "pumped the brakes" on God's plans for them. How about me? Have I in some way(s) pumped the brakes on God's plans for me? If so, how and why so? If not, why not?

Scripture doesn't say, but while the 12 guys were checking out the new digs for the children of Israel, what do I think everyone back in their camps were doing for those 40 days and why?

Pastor Wally asked if in the face of the unknown, will I trust God. Webster's 1828 dictionary defines trust to mean: "Confidence; a reliance or resting of the mind on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship or other sound principle of another person; credit given without examination; to be confident of something present or future." It's one thing to say that I trust God completely, but do my daily actions actually reflect that level of trust when it comes to:

My career/profession? Explain.

My finances? Explain.

My future? Explain.

My family? Explain.

Moses sent the spies out to find out "what the land is, and whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, and whether the land that they dwell in is good or bad, and whether the cities that they dwell in are camps or strongholds, and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. Be of good courage and bring some of the fruit of the land." (Numbers 13:18-20) Do any of these things really matter? If so, how so? If not, why not?

Pastor Wally asked who was it that sent the spies? Was it Moses or God? And???

Whose idea was it for us to begin planning to plant a garden on the back lot of the church's property? Pastor Wally's or God's and how do I know?

Whose idea was it for us to expand the Pregnancy Decision ministry by beginning a James 1:27 ministry to care for orphans and foster care children? Pastor Wally's or God's and how do I know?

Whose idea was it for us to expand our Titus 3:14 ministry to support specific missionaries in Central Asia? Pastor Wally's or God's and how do I know?

God is "gifting" this land that is flowing with milk and honey to the children of Israel. How would I feel if I gave someone a brand-new car and their response was, "That's really nice. Too bad it doesn't come with 4-wheel drive" and why?

In what way(s), if any, does my mindset/attitude/emotions color my opinion of the facts?

The spies reported that the land was good, but the people were too strong to be conquered. Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14 (ESV) “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.” When it comes to overcoming challenges in my life, do I more-often-than-not look for “the way [that] is easy which requires little or no sacrifice on my part and why?

C.H. Spurgeon said back on November 1, 1863: “Caleb stood alone, and took the brunt of the tumult. How courageous was that man, who had only numbered forty summers, to put himself in opposition to the other ten princes, and declare in flat contradiction to them — “Let us go up; we are able to possess the land.” When the people took up stones, and Joshua was forced to speak with Caleb, it was with great peril, and required great mental courage to stand up amidst the insults and jeers of the crowd, and still to bring up a good report of the land. Caleb followed the Lord sincerely. Oh beloved, how many profess to follow God who follow him without their hearts. The semblance of religion is often dearer to men than religion itself. As one says, many a man has spent five hundred pounds upon a picture of a beggar by Murillo, or a brigand by Salvator Rosa, who would not give a penny to a real beggar, and go out of their wits at the sight of a brigand. Men will give much to maintain the picture of religion and its outward name; but the reality of religion — ah! that is quite a different thing. Many of our Churches are capped with the cross in stone, but how few of the worshippers care to take up the cross of Christ daily and follow him...Happy shall that man be whose faith was a real faith, whose repentance was sincere, whose obedience was true, who gave his heart, his whole heart to his Master’s cause!” What does it take for me to follow God’s commands with my heart...to willingly “take up the cross of Christ daily and follow him”?

How big are my giants...my fears, my anxiety, my doubts?

What, if any, is the correlation between my idea of the size my life’s giants and the size of my God’s faithfulness? Explain.

In 1 Samuel 3:18 (ESV) I read: “So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, ‘It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him.’” It’s one thing to have this attitude during good times. Am I able to say the same when dealing with life’s struggles? If so, how so? If not, why not?