

James T. Jeremiah

Caleb

October 20, 1983

Transcript

James T. Jeremiah:

Thank you Kelly for that ministry in song and I want to express my appreciation to all who had a part in the music this week, while I've been here and I want to also tell you how much we appreciate your prayers. In a few weeks as our president has told you we'll be going to the West Coast and we've already scheduled meetings in many places and hope to be representative for Cedarville but going out there in this time of year with a 30 foot motor home is an adventure. So you pray for us that we will be able to be used of the Lord while we're there.

James T. Jeremiah:

Let's pray together before we come to the study of God's word. Our Father, we're thankful for the truth found in this Old Testament book for the challenge that we have, as we read the stories of victories, even as we read the stories of defeats and find out the lessons from these awful experiences, they warn us, they challenge us. Help us this morning as we look into this Book of Joshua once more to learn from it something that will help us to be better Christians, be better witnesses, to think about our future and the opportunities we have in the Lord. Speak to us today. In Jesus' name. Amen.

James T. Jeremiah:

Open your Bibles to Joshua chapter 14. I want to talk to you about a man who has this characteristic. He was enthusiastic at 85. Probably the reason he was, he was enthusiastic long before then. Joshua 14:6, then the children of Judah came under Joshua in Gilgal and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said unto him, "Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses, the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh Barnea. 40 years old was I when Moses, the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land and I brought him word again, as it was in mine heart. Nevertheless, my brethren that went up with me, made the heart of the people melt but I wholly followed the Lord my God. Moses swear on that day saying surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance and thy children's forever because thou hast wholly followed the Lord, my God.

James T. Jeremiah:

And now behold, the Lord has kept me alive as he said, these 40 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 that Lord speak in that day. Thou heardest in that day, how the Anakims were there and that the cities were great and fenced, so be that the Lord will be with me. Then I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said." And Joshua blessed him and gave unto Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, Hebron for an inheritance.

James T. Jeremiah:

Give me this mountain, who in the wide world wants to climb mountains at 85. Here was a man who wanted one. The mountain was Hebron or Hebron. First mentioned in Genesis 13:18, where Abraham built an altar. The meaning of this city or this town is access to and fellowship with God. That ought to be the goal of every single child of God from eight to 85 or anywhere in between that want to have in his experience, the possession of this great fact that we have access to God, that's by grace and we have

James T. Jeremiah

Caleb

October 20, 1983

fellowship with God by grace but that is maintained on the part of a believer by his walk with God. Caleb wanted it for the same reason we ought to want it and want to conquer for the Lord.

James T. Jeremiah:

First of all, he wanted it because it was in God's promise for him. In verse 12, that's very clear, clearly stated. God had promised to him and everything that God has promised to us we ought to want to claim, we ought to want to take whatsoever is born of God, that's a promise, overcometh the world. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

James T. Jeremiah:

The other reason why he wanted it is because it was in the enemy's possession. In verse 14, it reminds us that the Anakims, the giants, the strong people were there. The whole world lies in the lap of the wicked one as we saw yesterday and we as believers ought to recognize the fact that this is God's world, He made it and we as believers ought not to be content to just let the devil take over without having an influence for God on our part in the world in which we live.

James T. Jeremiah:

The history of the world, we're told by Carlyle is the biography of great men and the history of Israel is the biography of great men. The history of this book is the biography of two men, Joshua and Caleb. Caleb was enthusiastic at 85, think of that. He's been called Mr. Greatheart of the Old Testament.

James T. Jeremiah:

Soon after I left office, as president, I walked into this auditorium in a meeting. I'm not sure whether it was a pastors conference or a missionary meeting, but Dr. Don Ketchum was here. He's here this morning, so I didn't know he was going to be here I was going to tell the story anyway and he handed me a sheet of paper, a whole long list of things that I could know when I'm getting old. I didn't read them all very long. I didn't bring them with me this morning but there are some reasons, you know some of them. You're getting old when you plan to put something off until tomorrow, but you can't remember what you plan to put off. You know you're getting older when everything hurts and what doesn't hurt won't work.

James T. Jeremiah:

There was a man who went one day to see his doctor, he had a bad leg. The doctor said to him, the trouble with your leg is old age. He said, "That's strange. That's funny. He said the other one is just as old and that feels pretty good." Old people. Now the nice thing about being young is you're headed for being old. Like it or not that's what's going to happen, but here was a man who should be an example and everybody is an example. Sometimes we're horrible examples, but we're all examples. But here was a man that was an example to all around him of his confidence and his trust in God.

James T. Jeremiah:

Oswald Sanders points out two exciting truths illustrated by Caleb. He said, "It's possible as you think of Caleb to have great achievements, that'll take place in old age." Now I know some people like that. I've known some of them in my life and they've challenged me and when I get old, I hope I can challenge

James T. Jeremiah
Caleb
October 20, 1983

somebody else. It's great to know that God stands with his people through the years. There is no retiring age in the service of God.

James T. Jeremiah:

Now I want to think with you as much as I can this morning in the time we have about several things that describe this man, Caleb and I'll give you the alliterated outline so that you remember it. He was dependable, he was dedicated, he was different, he was determined, daring, dependent and decisive. These are good points for any believer, any age at any time. He was a man of real faith. God said something to him, he believed it and remembered it. He was a man of faithful service. He said, "Moses sent me, I brought him word." He was a man who stood out in contrasting courage. "My brethren made the people melt," he said, "By their unbelief. I followed the Lord."

James T. Jeremiah:

He was a man with a certain future. In verse nine, he speaks about the land, my inheritance and he was a man with a strong body. Strong as I was, then I am now. I don't know how he could be that good, I don't know how many races he would run and win but 85, not bad for a man who had been around all that time. He was mature, now there are a lot of definitions of maturity. Dictionary defines it as something that is fully grown or developed. It also defines it as something fully aged or ripened. The only thing I don't like about that is the next stage after being ripened. You can wait until the next class and figure that one out and teacher won't mind if you get it then.

James T. Jeremiah:

Let's think about him as a man who is dependable. Moses sent me, I brought him word. Caleb knew the meaning of total obedience. He knew the meaning of true loyalty. He knew the meaning of honest reporting, telling the truth. He knew how to make wise decisions, not like the old fellow at home grouchy old guy said to his wife at breakfast, "I want two eggs. I want one scrambled and I want one fried." And she brought the two eggs to him after being so obedient. He looked at her and he said, "You have scrambled the wrong one." This man was a fellow that wasn't looking for trouble. He wasn't making decisions without thinking like the man with the eggs. One who cannot follow very well cannot lead.

James T. Jeremiah:

And here's an interesting thing about this, man. You go back to the 13th chapter of Numbers and study his life. You will discover that he not Joshua was the leader. He led the spy team into the land of Palestine. He came back, so did Joshua with a report. These two men reported positively and when you find that story coming to its end, you read on in the scriptures and you read the book of Joshua and you don't find him mentioned in all of that book until this 14th chapter.

James T. Jeremiah:

Who's the leader, the man who wasn't. Joshua is the leader and I want to say about this man to his everlasting credit. There's every evidence in this Book of Joshua, that he was a good follower and if you are not a follower, you'll never be a leader. The fact of the matter is every one of us as Christians have this exhortation from the Lord Jesus, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." When God wants us to lead, He teaches us to follow. That's why in a Christian environment, in a Christian school and a Christian Church, Bible believing centers. God expects us to be followers as well as leaders and you find

James T. Jeremiah
Caleb
October 20, 1983

some ordinary ... ornery the one I want to say, ornery character, is always critical, always finding fault, always getting the wrong eggs scrambled. You'll discover that they won't be very much in leadership either.

James T. Jeremiah:

And here's a man that illustrates the point, he was dependable. God make us dependable people and do what we ought to do and stay with it and eliminate the whole business of excuses that we're so easily ready to give when we're supposed to accept responsibility. Man depended upon God and he was dependable in his life. He was dedicated. At least four times in the record of Caleb, it is said, "I wholly followed the Lord." Somebody said he was an egotist. Oh, stating a fact. We ought to be able to know whether we're following the Lord or not and we do know.

James T. Jeremiah:

We know whether we're trying to play, to kind of walk, deal with God. We know whether we're dedicated and following him. Joshua or rather Caleb and Joshua too did know that. This description of Caleb is repeated as I mentioned, at least four times in the scriptures. Today lukewarm worldly, materialistic, indifferent Christians, not looking for mountains to claim or to climb. We're more concerned about decaying, unsatisfying, earthly, mansions to claim. Now I may get in difficulty here, but Dr. Dixon is leaving, so am I and so I'll just take it for granted that I can do this. As some of you kids came to this college in order to get an education or a good salary.

James T. Jeremiah:

Now there's nothing wrong in having an ambition and a goal in life to make the best of your life in every way you can. But if you have more desire to find employment, that will give you tons of money and make you wealthy and I hope some of you are wealthy and you do something for this Ohio state graduate that finally got with it and became a member of the Cedarville college alumni, Gary Kuhn. He'd be happy to hear about you if you get wealthy, I hope you do. I'm talking about goals. The goal of this man, Caleb was to climb and take a mountain, not to claim a mansion.

James T. Jeremiah:

And our goals ought to be primarily first of all and always, what does God want me to do? And then to do it. He was a dedicated man. In contrast to Caleb some of these folks of our time it's not how much can I give, but how much can I get. More interested in personal security than there is in lost souls. Someone has said, "If God gave the command to angels to evangelize the world, heaven would be empty in five minutes." He didn't give that to angels, gave it to us, to you and to me.

James T. Jeremiah:

The Eastern prince required a servant to walk through the street with a shell filled with oil in his hands, he had to carry this shell of oil. He walked through the streets with this bowl of oil. He would have been disciplined if he'd spilled any of it and when asked, "What did you see when you walk through the street?" He replied, "Nothing. I had my eyes on the shell of oil. If I looked to the side or stumbled, I would have been disciplined." We fix our gaze upon the Lord Jesus we'll be able to walk through the temptations of life and be able to say with Caleb, I am one of God's dedicated people. He was a man given over to the Lord.

James T. Jeremiah
Caleb
October 20, 1983

James T. Jeremiah:

Next thing about him is he was different. Notice in verse eight. Nevertheless, my brethren that went up with me, made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed ... he was different. He and Joshua were both different. Now aren't you glad you students who were taking Old Testament introduction ... I don't think they'll make you do this but who knows, they might. Aren't you glad that they didn't make you memorize all the names of the spies that went into the land? Does anybody remember all 12 of them? Nobody. I looked over the list today and I must admit to you, I have difficulty pronouncing some of them, but you'll never forget Joshua and you'll never forget Caleb.

James T. Jeremiah:

You see these fellows saw enemies and so did Joshua and Caleb but they saw them in different ways. The man who came back with a report and said, "It is crowded with giants. It's filled with walled cities. There is much to destroy us. We cannot take it." They saw enemies but way off in the distance, they saw God but when these two men including Caleb looked out on the same scene, they saw God but way out in the distance they saw the enemies and somewhere in your life and mind if it hasn't already happened it will. There will be some enemies in the land, some opposition to face, some overcoming difficulties. It depends on where we put God in our thinking, in relationship to all of them.

James T. Jeremiah:

What happened to these great and glorious spies that came back with a majority report? They all died in the wilderness. Caleb and Joshua became the undertaking staff to bury them. They did not enter the land. They wanted to die in Egypt, they almost made it. They died in the wilderness and neither did their relatives succeed them too well either. Caleb had another spirit. He walked by faith, not by sight.

James T. Jeremiah:

Several years ago, I had the privilege of speaking at the Akron Baptist Temple is when Dr. Dallas Billington was still living and afterwards I had the privilege of having dinner with him. I'll never forget the conversation. I said to him, "When you started this church back in 1934, did you expect it to be as large as it is today?" Old man said, "When I started this church, I had egotism enough to believe that it would be this big." He wasn't an egotist. There's a difference between being an egotist and having a vision and I believe we as Christians ought to have some vision and if it gives the world the idea it's egotism, so what?

James T. Jeremiah:

If we don't have enough faith in a great God to do some great things like a Caleb did then we ought to find out why we cannot expect God to do greater things for us. He was different. Fact of the matter is you don't find too many people like Caleb even today. He was determined, the land shall be thine inheritance, we read in verses eight and nine, therefore give me this mountain. He kept this promise as his goal and he had it in his mind for 45 years and some of us can't keep a goal in our mind for 45 minutes.

James T. Jeremiah:

I've seen young people come to this college over the years and feel called of God, do something until they met somebody in whom they had great love and somebody changed the great goal. Now if you're

James T. Jeremiah
Caleb
October 20, 1983

here today as a man and you feel called of God to preach, you have a burden on your heart and God shows you differently. You don't need to be ashamed about that. The Lord knows we don't need any more self appointed preachers and missionaries and I said by the same token and let me tell you, if God has put a burden upon your heart to serve Him in some capacity, don't be deterred from that goal and that vision, by some thing that's going to happen that'll change your whole plan. He was not to be changed this man.

James T. Jeremiah:

Boy asked for a job in a grocery store, I like this one. He went into the grocery store, young lad probably 12, 13 years old and he wanted a job. Man in the charge said to him, "Well, you have a motto young man?" He said, "Yes, sir. I have your motto." "What is my motto?" He said, "As I came in this store today, I saw on that door, the word push." "That's your motto?" "That's my motto. I sort of like that." He pushed something beside the door, but it's good to have something in mind to have some determination. Some of you in the last few days, the last week or so you said, "I wonder if I can make it. I think I better quit. I'm going to go home to mommy." Where's your determination? Where is your Joshua spirit and your Caleb spirit? Give me this mountain.

James T. Jeremiah:

The drummer boy in Napoleon's Army was asked three times to beat retreat. He refused to do it. Finally, someone came up one of the officers said, "Why don't you obey?" He said, "Napoleon never taught me how to beat retreat." I hope you find this morning, a little encouragement to be determined by the grace of God. You're going to stay by what God has put you to do here to do. And let me suggest to you that studying psychology and chemistry and calculus and all the rest of that, that some of us may not be able to spell too well. All of that is in the plan of God for you to prepare you for the job God wants you to do in claiming mountains. Don't quit.

James T. Jeremiah:

He was a daring man. He said, "I am as strong as I was." I like that. "I'm as strong, as I was give me this mountain. I'll drive them out." Drive out what? Giants, Anakim. They weren't little boys and without battle ability. Drive them out, I'll do it.

James T. Jeremiah:

Have you ever climbed a mountain? Some of you are mountain climbers I think. Any of you ever been up Pikes Peak? Let me see. Oh, that's a great experience, isn't it? Oh, a long time ago our family was visiting in Colorado and we took a look at Pikes Peak and we had an old Dart, the reason they call that thing Dart is because you darted from one garage to the other and so we decided we'd climb the mountain. The two boys said, "Dad, let's go." We got up several hundred feet and the two girls and their mother said, "Let's not go."

James T. Jeremiah:

But the whole point of the story is that when you're up so far, there is no other way to go but go. You don't turn anything around, even a bicycle. It was so back in those days. No guardrails and down below the road, there were remnants of somebody who didn't make it and so the only way to go when you started up a mountain is to go until you get to the top. That was the philosophy of Caleb. Now I must tell you that when I got up there to 14,500 I think I said to my dear wife, "I feel dizzy." She said, "I don't care

James T. Jeremiah
Caleb
October 20, 1983

how dizzy you are. You're driving this back." She trusted me being dizzy I guess, better than she trusted herself, not being dizzy.

James T. Jeremiah:

There's some daring involved in Christian work, thousands have lost their lives climbing mountains and some may lose their lives climbing a mountain for God. Some of you've read you're studying sermons of all story of Rowland Hill. Was a preacher in London or in England. He was being criticized for being so daring in his preaching and he told this little illustration, and he said, "When I passed by a gravel pit and I saw that it had caved in and there it had buried men alive. I shouted so loud for rescuers that they heard me in town almost a mile away and they came to the rescue and nobody called me a madman." But he said, "When I see destruction about to fall on sinners and entomb them in the eternal mass of woe and cry aloud if for chance they may behold there danger and escape, they say, I am beside myself." Friend out yonder beyond these walls there are plenty of people, not in a cave-in but lost, going to hell. It's going to take some courage on our part to reach them."

James T. Jeremiah:

He was a dependent man. The Lord is with me then I shall be able. Let me go onto the next one, just briefly mention that he was a man with decision. Joshua gave onto Caleb, Hebron. Caleb drove fence, the three sons of Anak and in Judges 1:20 it says he expelled, benched the three sons of Anak. He drove them out and that at 85, he could still make and carry out decisions.

James T. Jeremiah:

He wasn't like a man of whom it was said when I was eight, I collected marbles and I knew how to use them. It was not until I was 80, that I began to lose them. He didn't lose his marbles. He was a man of decision. His victory was a satisfaction to him and a source of blessing to others what he won by the way he gave away. For he finally occupied just the fringes because the Levites took over the rest and he gave it to them.

James T. Jeremiah:

Our objective in life should be to glorify God, to help others and gain blessing in our own lives in that order. I'm going to close with this. I'm not finished but I'm closing. It was my privilege several months ago, participated in one of the Moody Bible Institute Pastors Conference and then at another time, perhaps at that time, I'm not sure exactly the details, but we sat in the auditorium and listened to Vance Havner. Vance Havner just become 80 and started out in his ... replied to the introduction, "I just came from the South. They had a great big blow-out for me down there." He said, "I was 80. So I'm glad to be here tonight in fact I'm glad to be anyplace at 80." And then he said something I'll never forget and it's challenged me I hope it will challenge you that dear old man said, "As I look out in the future, I have dedicated to Jesus, all of my leftovers."

James T. Jeremiah:

And I thought I don't have many of those either, leftovers and some of you say yes, some of you people have been around a while. Don't have many leftovers, but listen to me, friend, we may have more than some of you. We have no gain or no claim on life. No matter how old we are. Some of you have got more if you please leftovers, then it may be possible for some of the rest of us to have, but God wants

James T. Jeremiah

Caleb

October 20, 1983

us like Caleb, at 85 turn over our leftovers to him and today right now is a good time to make that decision and say, Lord, whatever there is left in my life for your glory, take it and use it.

James T. Jeremiah:

Father, thank you for today, for your presence with us, bless these students, encourage them, don't let anyone be a quitter. Don't let anyone go by the wayside because of fear, give them courage and commitment. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Paul D. Dixon:

Thank you, Dr. Jeremiah, that's a blessing and a challenge to all of us. Have a good day.