

A The faith of Caleb:

❖ **Making the impossible possible.**

- The name "Caleb" means "dog." As his life demonstrated, he didn't receive that name as a derogatory term, but because of his unwavering loyalty. He was faithful where others were unfaithful. He remained loyal to God where others flinched.
- Where ten spies saw cities impossible to conquer, and giants impossible to overcome, Caleb saw cities conquered and giants "eaten like bread" (Num. 13:28-33; 14:6-9).
- Together with Joshua (somewhat younger than him), he stood firm in his opinion, even when the crowd wanted to stone them (Num. 14:10).
- His example encourages us to maintain our firm faith in God, who can make possible what is impossible for us.

❖ **Faith in action.**

- According to Caleb himself, when Moses asked for an account, "I brought him back a report according to my convictions" (Josh. 14:7 NIV), and "I followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly" (Josh. 14:8 NIV). Because of his faithfulness, he was promised that he would inherit the place where his feet had set foot during the inspection (Josh. 14:9).
- Caleb was 40 years old when he was sent as a spy. After five years of conquest, he was now an old man of 85 (Josh. 14:10). His body and mind were still as vigorous, and his thoughts were still the same (Josh. 14:11).
- The time had come to claim the promise and prove that his words were not in vain. With God's help, he was going to devour the giants and conquer their cities (Josh. 14:12-14).

❖ **Passing the torch.**

- When he had conquered part of the territory that was his, Caleb considered the legacy he would leave behind. Would his descendants continue to trust in God as he had?
- He had proven that God could be trusted, now he wanted to find someone who had the same faith, so he could pass the torch to them.
- For this reason, he promised his daughter's hand to the one who conquered Kiriath-sepher, also called Debir (Josh. 15:15-16).
- His nephew Othniel was the mighty man who conquered the city, and became the first judge of Israel (Josh. 15:17; Judges 3:9-11).
- After marrying Achsah, Caleb's daughter, she persuaded her father to allow him to expand the conquered area (Josh. 15:18-19), thus proving himself a worthy heir to Caleb.

B The faith of Joshua.

- ❖ As a young man, Joshua was chosen by Moses as his assistant. He proved to be obedient, courageous, faithful, helpful, and a lover of the things of God (Ex. 33:11).
- ❖ When the time came to claim his own territory, he waited until all the tribes had obtained their inheritance, and he chose "the portion left over" [Timnath-serah] (Josh. 19:50), a city near Shiloh, where the Sanctuary had been erected.
- ❖ From his story, we learn that:
 - Faith does not ignore the facts, it simply offers a different angle of understanding
 - Instead of complaining, we are called to trust and submit to God's plans
 - Blessings come to those who remain totally in the Lord
 - Life in all its dimensions must be lived according to the plans established by God
 - It is worth living close to God (Ps. 84:10)

C How to obtain faith.

- ❖ The Bible invites us to observe the example of the great heroes of faith, with special attention to Jesus, the supreme example (Heb. 12:1-2).
- ❖ By studying the lives of people of faith like Caleb and Joshua, we learn to trust God as they did; to be humble as they were; to bear witness to the truth with courage, as they did.
- ❖ But how can we be transformed? The Bible is clear: by allowing the Holy Spirit to work in us. (2 Cor. 3:18).

This is an active work. We must choose to be transformed and, like Caleb, get to work. We are called to be living sacrifices for God (Rom. 12:1-2).