

Sermon Notes: Sunday, September 25, 2016

“Facing the GIANTS: Cowardice or Courage” Numbers 13:26-14:10, 14:20-25

Today we'll look at what we need to have to face our giants. *What do we need? We need courage. Courage is considered a moral trait, along with love, along with patience, along with honesty. It's a moral character, and it's something God expects from us.* This chapter we're reading is about fear. It's about fear reactions, and it shows us so much about it.

Recently, I read a list of things somebody studied what Americans are most afraid of. There was this long list.

- One of the Number 1 fears ... fear of death.
- one of the greatest fears was the fear of public speaking.
- Another fear on the list is fear of rejection, terrific fear of rejection.
- Another one is the fear of the future.
- And, of course, this one ties into that. It's a huge one. The fear of change.

Do you know what's underneath all the fears? Under all those fears, even the fear of death, is really a fear of _____, and it comes from this: All of us have a _____. We all have our spiritual life rafts, things we're clinging to so we don't sink, our spiritual security blankets.

ULTIMATELY OUR FEARS COME BECAUSE OF A MISTRUST IN GOD.

If you clung completely to God, if He was your only security, you would go through this life without fear. The process of growth, and grace, and sanctification is to get to that place and find out what those other things are that you are really resting on instead of God. Get rid of them so you can cling to Him alone.

- We make money our security.
- We make our performance our security.
- We make our looks our security.
- We make things our security, and those are the things we get scared about.

How do you know what your real security blankets are, the life rafts you're holding onto instead of God? Follow your fears. They'll show you.

Look at what Caleb says, "... do not rebel against the Lord, and do not be afraid of the people of the land ..." *Do you see that? He says to rebel against God and to be scared of the people is the same thing.* It's not two different things. It's the same thing. Why? Because being afraid is a refusal to _____ or see Him as He is. When you're afraid of anything, what you're really saying is, "God is a small thing, smaller than this. This is bigger. This is more than God can handle."

You have to take the gospel, you have to remind yourself of the gospel that saved you, if you're going to proceed and grow, and grow in courage. You never can get away from that. Begin to say this to yourself as a way of looking at how you were delivered from Egypt and as a way of working on your Canaans—facing your giants: "Why am I afraid of failure? Do I live by my performance, or by the grace and righteousness of Christ? Have I gotten this far on the basis of my efforts, and my smarts, and on the basis of my discipline, or have I come here sheerly by the grace and righteousness of Christ?"

John Piper in his book, *Future Grace*, says this. He says, "...behind most wrong living is wrong thinking...the way [we] think about Christian living is often absorbed from the cultural air we breathe rather than learned from categories of Scripture." Right thinking will get rid of the fear. Fear is an absence of thinking. Fear is an absence of thinking about God. Fear is an absence of thinking accurately about God. Fear is an absence of adoration and seeing His glory and believing His promises.

So what is the prescription for courage? Let me just mention four things.

- First, true _____.
- Secondly, practice the presence of God in _____.
- Thirdly, I'll just say this: Don't go back to _____.
- And one last thing. At a certain point, you have to say, "If I'm going to have a fear experience, I'll just have to have it. I'm going to do what's right. I'm going to refuse to panic. I'm going to think about who God is."