

Sunday 9th May 2021

Grandma used to rock and knit,
Crochet, tat, and baby-sit.
When the kids were in a jam,
They could always count on Gram.
In an age of gracious living,
Grandma was the one for giving.
Grandma now is at the gym
Exercising to keep slim.
She's off walking with a bunch,
Taking clients out to lunch.
Driving north to ski or curl,
All her days are in a whirl.
Nothing seems to stop or block her,
Now that Grandma's off her rocker.

Grandma is a lot busier than she used to be, but is her life fuller? She's doing lots of things, but is she satisfied? How about you at whatever age you are? You may be busy, but are you fully satisfied with your life? You may be doing lots of things, but are you fulfilling God's rich purpose for you? Do you want to know how you can? Then I invite you to turn with me to Joshua 14, where you can learn from a man in his 80's still living life to the full and accomplishing all that God has for him. At this point in the story, Joshua has conquered the Promised Land. Now, he is distributing various plots of land to the different tribes and families of Israel. And as they approach Joshua for their allotment, an old man has an unusual request. Joshua 14:6-8 Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. I was forty years old 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 my heart. But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the LORD my God. (ESV)

Caleb recalls the time when 40 years previously, Moses sent him, Joshua, and ten other men into the Promised Land to spy

it out. They all returned with glowing reports about how rich the land was, but 10 of the spies advised against going into the land as God had commanded. That's because they saw giants and big walled cities there. And they were convinced that the land was impenetrable, that they would all die if they tried to take it. So they told the people to disregard God's command and stay out.

Joshua and Caleb, on the other hand, urged the people to trust the Lord and obey His directive to enter the land and take it. God is bigger than any giant and stronger than any walled city; and with Him on their side, they can prevail. Well, the people believed the majority report, disobeyed God, and turned away. As a result, they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years where that whole generation died off. When their children grew up, Joshua led them into the promised land; and as God promised, they conquered it. Now, Joshua and Caleb are the only ones left of their generation. They alone were able to enter the Promised Land with their children because they alone followed the Lord. Caleb reminds Joshua of that day. Then he reminds Joshua of the promise Moses made to him.

Joshua 14:9-12 And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.' And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said." (ESV)

Caleb asks Joshua for the toughest part of the land, the part where the Anakim dwell. The Anakim were the giants, which scared the previous generation away. They lived in the hills in heavily fortified cities, but that didn't scare Caleb away. Caleb asks for THEIR land, a bold request for an 85-year-old man to make! How does Joshua respond?

Joshua 14:13-15 Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba. (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war. (ESV)

Caleb was able to take Kiriath-arba, literally, the City of Arba, who was the biggest giant of all! And so he conquered the last remaining enemy, and the war was finally over.

Most older men talk about their former conquests. Caleb took on new ones! He lived a full life until the end! How about you? I urge you, like Caleb...

LIVE A FULL LIFE.

Don't be content to celebrate past victories. By God's grace, pursue new ones! Take on the toughest challenges, and enjoy the abundant life God has for you.

Please, whatever your age, don't you dare give up on life.

Instead, take on the toughest challenges, and dare to live a full life right up until the end. The question is: How? How do you live a full life no matter your age? How do you relish the challenges ahead and enjoy the abundant life God has for you? Well, you do what Caleb did and...

FOLLOW THE LORD FULLY.

Obey the Lord completely. Wholly commit yourself to accomplishing God's will and purpose for your life.

Caleb chose to go God's way even if everybody else wasn't. He didn't follow the crowd; He followed the Lord, and that's what you must do if you want to live a full life. Wholly follow the Lord! Trust God completely. Wholly depend on the Lord. First, trust in His promise. Depend on God's Word.

That's what led Caleb to follow the Lord fully and live a full life.

In verse 6, Caleb says to Joshua, "You know what the Lord said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me." And what did God say to Moses? Verse 9:

"Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever..." Caleb is

counting on God's promise made to Him 40 years previously!

That's what kept him going all those years. That's what caused him to live for the Lord and enjoy the full life God had for him.

And if that's what you want, you need to do the same. Trust in God's promises to you. Depend on God's Word.

God promised Caleb only a PART of the Promised Land. On the other hand, God has promised us "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." All of heaven is ours with All its blessings! If the promise of PART of the Promised Land motivated Caleb to live a full life with full commitment to the Lord, then how much more should the promise of All of heaven motivate believers today?

More than that, trust in God's power. Depend on the Lord's strength, not you own. That's what Caleb did. In verse 10, Caleb said, "The Lord has kept me alive, just as He said, these 45 years... And now, behold, I am this day 85 years old." Verse 11: "I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then..."

It sounds an awful lot like Philippians 4:13, which says, "I can do all things through [Christ] who strengthens me."

Caleb depended on the Lord's strength, not His own, and that's what you must do if you want to live a full life wholly committed to the Lord. Trust in God's power. Depend on the Lord's strength, not your own. If you want to follow the Lord fully and live a full life, then trust in His promise; trust in His power; and finally... Trust in His presence. Depend on God's company.

That's what Caleb did. When he asked Joshua to give him the hill country where the giants lived, he said in verse 12, "It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the Lord said." Caleb counted on God's presence, and that's what you must do if you want to live a full life wholly committed to the Lord. We live in dark days with our country divided as never before, with our enemies threatening its very foundations, and our leaders without any good answers.

Psalm 23 says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4). And God Himself has promised, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). So count on His presence even when you face the darkness.