

Fear robs us of the promise/blessing of God.

Introduction:

- Numbers 13:30-33. Numbers 13 and 14 is a beautiful and yet tragic picture of when faith and fear collide. Faith always gets its promise and fear always gets its torment.
 - All of chapters 1-10 in Numbers are preparation for the moment of entrance into the promise. Or as some say, The Promised Land. What is your promised land? And how are you getting ready to enter?
 - The tragedy of this section is the failure of the people to trust God and the consequent punishment for their rebellion. The very phrase used to number the tribes in chapter 1 is used to punish them in 14:29, ('those twenty years and up.)
- The first 10 chapter are positive and they reveal God's plan for Israel to inhabit the land promised to them. The human response to that revelation was rebellion.
 - It went so far as to charge God with bringing them into the wilderness to die. 14:3.
 - This charge reveals how shallow Israel was in understanding who God is, what His nature is like and how He acts.

I. Fear Is A Thief

A. The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy.

1. Like all good thieves, in order to be successful you must have a distraction. Ie. You offer them one thing to take away what you don't want them to have. Ie. As parents you are aware of this. You do it all the time to your young children. Something shiny for dirty blanket that needs washed.
 - a) The distraction takes you away from what is important. It's critical we stay connected to God.
 - b) The distraction causes you to shift focus. Wrong priority or focus.
 - c) The distraction divides your attention, therefore cause double mindedness. *"... Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord."* (James 1:6-7, NLT) NKJV such people are double minded.
2. The easiest way for the devil to steal from a Christian is to get them to believe a lie.
 - a) When we get into fear, or we begin to entertain fear, we are now entertaining a second opinion. (the devil's opinion) rather than truth.
 - (1) Our passage today. *"This was their report to Moses: "We entered the land you sent us to explore, and it is indeed a bountiful country—a land flowing with milk and honey. Here is the kind of fruit it produces. But the people living there are powerful, and their towns are large and fortified. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak!"* (Numbers 13:27-28, NLT)
 - (2) The report is: it is a bountiful country; it is a land flowing with milk and honey; here is a sample of its fruit. THREE positive reasons to go at once and take it!
 - (3) Then enters the 'BUT' report. "But" marks the place of second opinion.

3. Anytime you believe a lie you empower and allow the thief to steal from you. You open the door to oppression the moment you start to believe a lie. Is 54:13-14
- B. The Thief is after your faith and he gets it by stealing the Word. Mk 4. If he can get you away from your faith, he has now stolen the promise. When the promise is gone he has now positioned you to be devoured. IE. CS Lewis in the Screwtape Letters. Wormword, the nephew demon, is being trained by his uncle Screwtape on how to destroy a Christian. The goal: you have to separate him from God. The whole book is about getting the new christian to believe lies and not truth.
 1. When the 10 spies get Israel to believe lie(s) and not truth, Israel is now being separated from God cut off from the promise/Word. What are the facts? And what are the lies they were believing?
 - a) Fact: the people are strong. Lie: The people living there are more powerful than God.
 - b) Fact: the cities are fortified. Lie: The cities they dwell in, God can't enter.
 - c) Fact: the people are very big. Lie: God will have a hard time driving them out.
 - d) Fact: God will never leave or forsake us. Lie: We are on our own if we try to do this.
 - e) Lie: It is all about me. 13:31
 2. More facts in light of the lies.
 - a) Fact: One man with God delivered an entire nation from slavery.
 - b) Fact: One man with God destroyed all the armies of Egypt.
 - c) Fact: It was God who destroyed the armies of Egypt by drowning them in the Red Sea.
 - d) Fact: God took the impoverished Jewish slaves of Egypt and caused them to leave with all the gold and silver.
 - e) God did all this to show the children of Israel who He is. And that it 'pays' to follow Him.
- C. The thief presents facts but he does not give us the truth. 13:28-29 Again, we are not going to deny the fact. We are going to choose truth in light of them.
 1. The people are powerful. Not a lie.
 2. The cities there are fortified. Not a lie.
 3. There are giants in the land. Not a lie. (If fear is a thief then faith is friend.)

II. Faith Is A Friend

- A. Faith is a wonderful companion to travel through life with! It does the opposite of fear.
 1. Faith gives us access to God. And God is our source.
 - a) *"And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him."* (Hebrews 11:6, NLT)
 - b) *"This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life."* (Romans 1:17, NLT)
 2. Faith make all things possible.

- a) Father with epileptic son. *“What do you mean, ‘If I can?’” Jesus asked. “Anything is possible if a person believes.”* (Mark 9:23, NLT)
 - b) *“For the word of God will never fail.” Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then the angel left her.* (Luke 1:37-38, NLT)
3. Faith comforts
- a) *“But Jesus overheard them and said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid. Just have faith.”* (Mark 5:36, NLT) Jairus had just been told his daughter was dead. And to no longer trouble the teacher.
 - b) *“I, yes I, am the one who comforts you. So why are you afraid of mere humans, who wither like the grass and disappear?”* (Isaiah 51:12, NLT)
4. Faith provides
- a) *“However, we don’t want to offend them, so go down to the lake and throw in a line. Open the mouth of the first fish you catch, and you will find a large silver coin. Take it and pay the tax for both of us.”* (Matthew 17:27, NLT)
- B. A Friend Gives - Jn 10:10 *I have come to give...*
1. Note Jesus action in Jn 10:10 I have come to give. He is not in our lives to take away. The very nature of God is good! It is crucial for the believer to know the nature of God. When we know that He is good we can trust him.
 - a) Israel did not know the nature of God. Therefore they forgot what he had just done weeks earlier. They forgot that that God came to give...freedom, land, gold and silver and His presence.
 - b) Therefore they rebelled against God. Lets note the process. At any point in the process you can still change your attitude.
 - (1) They feared for their lives. 13:31 ...Fear - is a lie they believed.
 - (2) They cried all night. Number 14:1 ...Pity - poor me
 - (3) They complained. Numbers 14:2 ...Blame - God and Moses
 - (4) They plotted to choose a new leader. 14:4 ...Control
 2. He gives abundantly. It is the nature of God to give life not take it.
 - a) Faith - connection to God.
 - b) Secure - I know who He is and who I am. And I know He knows whose I am!
 - c) Bless - All the way down to the next generations...Numbers 14:24-ff. Abundantly!!!
 - d) Sought the plan of God.
- C. Faith and Denial. There are things that happen to us. There are things given to us...that are true but they are not truth. IE. A doctors report may be true but it is not truth.
1. Don’t call those things that are as though they are not. Call those things that are not as though they are. Denying what is true will not help you but dealing with what is truth will. Ro 4:17
 2. *“So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.”* (Matthew 10:31, NLT)

III. Fellowship Is Privilege

- A. Walking as a friend of God. *"But my servant Caleb has a different attitude than the others have. He has remained loyal to me, so I will bring him into the land he explored. His descendants will possess their full share of that land."* (Numbers 14:24, NLT)
1. Caleb had faith.
 2. Caleb had access to God
 3. Caleb obtained the promise: entrance into the promised land and the taking of his mountain.
 4. Caleb was not double minded. Caleb did not have a divided loyalty like James spoke of James 1:6-7 Therefore he received his promise.
- B. Things that faith requires to work
1. Connection - to the source. Walk with the Holy Spirit. Heb 11:6
 - a) Revelation of who He is.
 - b) The Word is our source. Mark 4. 4:20 'hear the Word, accept the Word, bear fruit.
 2. Focus - we have to be single minded, because the double minded man is like the waves tossed about on the ocean. Peter got off focus and started to sink.
 - a) IE. Peter Mt 14:26-30 Peter started to sink when he took his eyes off Jesus and put them on the waves and wind. Good news is: they walked back to the boat together.
 3. Commitment to the Word.
 - a) *"But Jesus answered him, saying, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' ""* (Luke 4:4, NKJV)
 4. Confession - saying the same things that God says. "What has God said that I can say?"
 - a) Confession means to say the same thing. *"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."* (Hebrews 10:23, NKJV)
 5. Faith Trumps Fear every time!

Close:

- Fear robs us of the blessing of God.
- Faith obtains the blessings of God.
- "I cant afford to have a thought in my head about me that He does not have in His head about me." Bill Johnson.
- Only Joshua and Caleb entered the land. Entered the promise.
- Just as the fate of fear rests with you so does the promise! You choose.