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Caleb & Joshua: Overcoming the Impossible

Numbers 13:26—14:10

God seems to delight in setting up impossible situations—David against Goliath, Gideon with 300 men going into battle against 135,000 Midianites, eleven fearful apostles taking on the Roman Empire with the gospel. In the midst of a society that values control, power, security and human strength, it is no wonder we struggle to allow Christ to be formed in us through seemingly impossible situations.

GROUP DISCUSSION. How do you respond when confronted with a seemingly impossible situation?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. What impossible situation are you facing today?

The people of Israel felt that way after the twelve spies, whom Moses had sent out to explore the Promised Land, returned with their report. God had already freed Israel from their miserable slavery in Egypt and had miraculously provided for them in the desert. Now he

asked them to trust him by invading the Promised Land. The problem, however, was that the land had large, well-fortified cities and was filled with giants. It seemed impossible. *Read Numbers 13:26—14:10.*

1. What report do the spies give to Moses, Aaron and the Israelite community after forty days of spying out the land (13:26-29)?

2. How does Caleb's perspective differ from that of the majority (13:30)?

3. What further negative information do the rest of the spies mention to oppose Caleb (13:31-33)?

4. Describe how the people react to the differing perspectives (14:1-4, 10).

5. Why is the temptation so great for them to return to Egypt?

6. Imagine that you are one of the Israelites at the border of the land God promised to give you. What thoughts and feelings would you have as you listened to both sides of this debate?

7. How do Joshua and Caleb respond in the midst of the tremendous unbelief of the people (14:6-9)?

8. Why do they come to an entirely different conclusion than the other ten spies?

9. Due to their lack of faith in the promise and power of God, this generation of Israelites, except for Joshua and Caleb, never entered the Promised Land (Numbers 32:10-12). How does our lack of faith

prevent us from experiencing God's blessing and power in our lives?

10. What are the “giants” confronting you today?

your church or fellowship group?

11. How can the example of Caleb and Joshua encourage you to trust God more fully in one seemingly impossible situation in your life? What specific step(s) can you take to follow their example in dealing with your “giants”?

Spend time praising God for who he is, and ask him to grant you the confidence and faith of Joshua and Caleb.

Now or Later

Read the story of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17. What additional insights does this passage provide for you in overcoming the impossible in your life?