

A Giant Named Fear

Scripture: Numbers 13:1 - 3 & 25 – 33

Today within our country and world we have a giant named FEAR! We have coronavirus – a giant named FEAR! We have systemic racism – a giant named FEAR! And we have great division – a giant named FEAR!

In verse 32 of our scripture reading from the Book of Numbers – the spies that Moses had sent out said - The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size! They were GIANTS!

God spoke to Moses, telling him to send spies into Canaan, the Promised Land. These spies were to search the area and bring their report back of what they saw to the Israelites. There were 12 spies sent out.

They all discovered the land as luscious with much fruit around. They saw a land flowing with milk & honey. In the Holy Land, the phrase ‘milk and honey’ means something totally different than we think of that phrase. We think the phrase ‘Milk and Honey’ means cow’s milk and bee honey but in the Holy Land, the phrase ‘Milk and Honey’ means goat’s milk and a dark syrup which is taken from dates. I drank some goat milk and poured some date syrup on my pancakes in the Holy Land. In many ways it was the same as our milk and honey.

Have you ever seen a land flowing with milk & honey?

I did have a similar experience when I got off of a plane in Phoenix Arizona in the spring time. The temperature was fantastic, the palm trees look wonderful, and the air was clean and refreshing. Sun Valley which is what Phoenix is called was definitely the valley of Milk and Honey! I will not tell you about when I returned to Phoenix again in August!

Have you ever been sent ahead of someone to search something out? Once in the game of 'Capture the Flag' I can remember being sent out by my team into an open meadow to see if any of the opposing team were near the meadow. I slowly walk out into the meadow. I walked squatting down low. I can picture the meadow now; it was adorned by daisies and other beautiful flowers. It was flowing with milk & honey.

In our Old Testament story today, 10 of the 12 spies discover something in Canaan, the Promised Land - they discover fear! They came back and told Moses in their report that the people living in Canaan are like giants! A giant named fear!

In my story of 'Capture the Flag' I discovered fear also. About half way into the meadow, I saw the opposing team hiding to ambush us. I quickly turned around and returned to my team and told them that the meadow was beautiful but the enemy was in there. I discovered the giant named fear!

Only Caleb & Joshua, 2 of the 12 spies, wanted to conquer

the territory. They did not see giants; they did not see the giant named fear! The other 10 spies allowed fear of the people in Canaan to overrule their faith in God. The giant named fear had overwhelmed their faith in God.

As a result of their giant named fear - the Israelites were forced to wander in the desert for 40 years. They were close to the Promised Land, yet so far away!

How often do we allow the giant named fear to prevent us from doing God's will? If God should call you to share your faith, are you overwhelmed by a giant named fear? If God calls you into his service, are you overcome by a giant named fear? Do you continue to wander in an arid desert of withered faith or would you like Caleb & Joshua say - The Lord is with me. I will not fear!

In this year 2020, we have truly faced a giant named fear. Coronavirus is a giant named FEAR! Systemic racism is a giant named FEAR. We went from normal life to sheltering in place for three months. We went from greeting each other with a handshake or a hug to wearing a face mask and staying six feet apart. And we went from watching the Nightly News to dreading the Nightly News because it makes us angry and afraid.

Oh, truly, we are facing a giant named fear.

If I would choose twelve of you to venture into our world, what would you report back to me? If I choose you to go out and

spy on this world, would you report that covid-19 is a great giant? Would you look at us as grasshoppers and look at the world as giants?

Would you report back that the protesting taking place in our country against systemic racism is a giant named fear in the USA?

Would you report back that our nation has a giant named FEAR?

What we need are some Caleb's and Joshua's! We need people who will report back – that if God is with us, no one can appose us. Are you a Caleb or a Joshua? Are you our Caleb or Joshua?

Let me concluded this message with this – the generation who went to war during WWII has been called 'the greatest generation'. They responded overwhelming to the call to serve their country, not like our Bible story where 10 out 12 gave into the giant named fear.

I hope that what we do next in our shared ministry by our actions, our words, and our deeds will be to take on the giant named fear!

May God bless each of you in your fight against the giant named FEAR!

Let us pray:

May we never become like the 10 spies who saw the

Promised Land and were overcome by fear. May we always see your glory and feel your strength to overcome the giant named fear. AMEN.

To end this message, I think the most important fact to remember in your fight against the giant named FEAR is found in this song that my seven year old grandson, Grayson Joshua Plocinski will share – Grayson – you're up!