



# Believing God

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(Numbers 13-14)

(John 20:30–31) — Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup>but these are written so that you may *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that *by believing you may have life* in his name.

- *Pisteuō* — 1) to believe something to be true and, therefore, worthy of being trusted. 2) to believe to the extent of complete trust and reliance — *to believe in, to have confidence in, to have faith in, to trust*

◆ **Illustration:** CHILD JUMPING INTO THE ARMS OF A PARENT  
(Faith - trust - believing)

# ◆ Following Jesus is all about Believing

## **Believing — is the doorway to salvation**

(John 3:16) — For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever *believes* in him should not perish but have eternal life.

(John 6:40) — For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and *believes* in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

## **Believing — is the work God has called us to**

(John 6:28–29) — Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” <sup>29</sup>Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you *believe* in him whom he has sent.”

## **Believing — is the only way to please Him**

(Hebrews 11:6) — And without *faith* it is impossible to please him ...

We are called *Believers*.

## ◆ **The enemy does not want us to believe God.**

(Genesis 3:1–4) — Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” <sup>2</sup>And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup>but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.

**NOTE: We are in a war - the enemy will do everything he can to keep you from believing.**

One of the great stories in the Bible that teaches us the importance of Believing God is found in Numbers 13 & 14, the story of the 12 spies.

## ◆ God has Promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants

### When Abraham was 75 years old

(Genesis 12:7) — Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “*To your offspring I will give this land.*”

### After Abraham and Lot separated

(Genesis 13:14–15) — The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, <sup>15</sup> for *all the land that you see I will give to you* and to your offspring forever.

### When Abraham was 99 years old

(Genesis 17:8) — And *I will give to you* and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, *all the land of Canaan*, for an everlasting possession...

### Isaac in his blessing over Jacob

(Genesis 28:4) — May [God] give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you, that you may take possession of *the land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham!*”

### To Moses and the people at Sinai (after the golden calf)

*(There was about 245 years between Abraham’s death and Moses’ birth)*

(Exodus 33:2) — The Lord said to Moses, “Depart; go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘*To your offspring I will give it.*’

**NOTE:** God has *promised* repeatedly that He will give them the land.

**(Verse 1-2) —**

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, *which I am giving to the people of Israel.*”

◆ **God’s sends them on a mission**

**Who was supposed to go?**

(Verse 2-3) — ...*From each tribe* of their fathers you shall send *a man*, every one *a chief* among them.” <sup>3</sup> So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, according to the command of the Lord, all of them men who were *heads of the people* of Israel.

- One from each tribe. A man who was a chief (leader). — *It’s the leaders who influence (and should represent) the thinking and believing of the people.*

**What was the mission? — (Make an assessment of the land)**

(Verse 17–20) — Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan and said to them, “Go up into the Negeb and go up into the hill country, <sup>18</sup> and see what the land is, and whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, <sup>19</sup> and whether the land that they dwell in is good or bad, and whether the cities that they dwell in are camps or strongholds, <sup>20</sup> and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. *Be of good courage* and bring some of the fruit of the land.” Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes.

- See what the land is. Are the people strong or weak, few or many? Is the land good or bad? Are the cities camps or strongholds? Is the land rich or poor. Are trees in it? Bring some of the fruit back.

**The mission was NOT — Decide if God can fulfill His promise?**

**Now lets read what happened:**

**READ: (Verses 13:25 — 14:10)**

## ◆ The Bad Report

### **#1 — Their thoughts were filled with fear and unbelief**

(Vs 31) - “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.”

### **#2 — Therefore their words were full of fear and unbelief**

(Vs 28-29) — “...the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. <sup>29</sup>The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan”... (Vs 31) —...“We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.”

### **#3 — Their report filled others with fear and unbelief**

(14:1) - “Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night.”

### **#4 — This caused them all to speak out against God**

(14:2-4) — And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! <sup>3</sup>Why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?” <sup>4</sup>And they said to one another, “Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

### **#5 — Then they turned on their brothers**

(Vs 10) - Then all the congregation said to stone them with stones.

# ◆ The Good Report

## #1 — Their thoughts were filled with faith and belief

(Vs 30) - But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “Let us go up at once and occupy it, for *we are well able to overcome it.*”

(14:6-8) - And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes <sup>7</sup> and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, “The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. <sup>8</sup> *If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us*, a land that flows with milk and honey.

## #2 — They spoke against the fear and unbelief

(Vs 9) - Only do not *rebel* against the Lord. And do not *fear* the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not *fear* them.

## #3 — They were rewarded

- Joshua became the next leader of God’s people.
- God used Joshua to lead His people to take possession of the promise land.
- Caleb & Joshua were rewarded with long life - they both lived through the forty years in the wilderness and were able to take possession of their portion of the land.

# ◆ The Result of the Unbelief

## #1 — Emotional turmoil

Because they gave voice to their fear and unbelief, all the people were thrown into an emotional turmoil. Those who were already full of fear grabbed hold of their words and they sunk deeper. Those who were full of faith were still troubled because they knew the fear and unbelief would offend God.

## #2 — God punished them

(Vs 28-30) - As I live, declares the Lord, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you: <sup>29</sup> your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and of all your number, listed in the census from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against me, <sup>30</sup> not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell...

(Vs 37) - the men who brought up a bad report of the land—died by plague before the Lord.

## #3 — Their children suffered

(Vs 33) - and your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness.

## #4 — All God's people suffered

They all had to stay in the wilderness forty years and wait to enter the promised land. Even Caleb and Joshua, who honored God, had to wait because of the sins of the others.

# ◆ Closing: How can I believe?

## #1 — Repent from your unbelief

(Hebrews 3:12–13) — Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an *evil, unbelieving heart*, leading you to fall away from the living God. <sup>13</sup>But **exhort one another every day**, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be *hardened* by the deceitfulness of sin.

## #2 — Honor God with your thoughts

Do battle with your thoughts — (2 Corinthians 10:4–5) — For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. <sup>5</sup>We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and *take every thought captive to obey Christ*.

Fix your mind on Jesus — (Isaiah 26:3) — You keep him in **perfect peace** *whose mind is stayed on you*, because he *trusts* in you.

### \*\* IMPORTANT \*\*

When you are in a crisis of belief, the battle will be in your mind — between faith and fear. Will you focus your thoughts on what you are scared about, or will you focus your thoughts on what you believe about God?

**NOTE:** WE MUST FILL OUR MIND WITH RIGHT THINKING.

Read the Bible. Listen to Christ-honoring music. Watch Christ-honoring things. Don't let the enemy have access to the doorway of your mind.





### #3 — Honor God with your words

(Proverbs 13:3) – “Whoever guards his *mouth* preserves his life; he who opens wide his *lips* comes to ruin.”

(Matthew 12:34-37) – “...For out of the abundance of the heart *the mouth speaks*. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for *by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned*.”

#### ● **Illustration:** THOSE WHO SPEAK WELL OF GOD

(Malachi 3:16-18) — Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. *The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him* of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name. “They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him...”

### #4 — Ask God to help you

When a father was asking Jesus to deliver his son from an evil spirit — (Mark 9:22–24) — ... if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” <sup>23</sup>And Jesus said to him, “‘If you can’! All things are possible for one who believes.” <sup>24</sup>Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “*I believe; help my unbelief!*”

#### ◆ **Illustration:** CHILD JUMPING INTO THE ARMS OF A PARENT (Faith - trust - believing)

### Your are going to face...

- Normal troubles of life
- And eventually, a Crisis of belief

## You must Believe God