

Joshua 14

New International Version

Division of the Land West of the Jordan

14 Now these are the areas the Israelites received as an inheritance in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the tribal clans of Israel allotted to them. ² Their inheritances were assigned by lot to the nine and a half tribes, as the Lord had commanded through Moses. ³ Moses had granted the two and a half tribes their inheritance east of the Jordan but had not granted the Levites an inheritance among the rest, ⁴ for Joseph's descendants had become two tribes—Manasseh and Ephraim. The Levites received no share of the land but only towns to live in, with pasturelands for their flocks and herds. ⁵ So the Israelites divided the land, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Allotment for Caleb

⁶ Now the people of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the Lord said to Moses the man of God at Kadesh Barnea about you and me. ⁷ I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land. And I brought him back a report according to my convictions, ⁸ but my fellow Israelites who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt in fear. I, however, followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly. ⁹ So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly.'

¹⁰ "Now then, just as the Lord promised, he has kept me alive for forty-five years since the time he said this to Moses, while Israel moved about in the wilderness. So here I am today, eighty-five years old! ¹¹ I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then. ¹² Now give me this hill country that the Lord promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there and their cities were large and fortified, but, the Lord helping me, I will drive them out just as he said."

¹³ Then Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance. ¹⁴ So Hebron has belonged to Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite ever since, because he followed the Lord, the God of Israel,

wholeheartedly. ¹⁵ (Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba after Arba, who was the greatest man among the Anakites.)
Then the land had rest from war.

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

⁶ For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

¹⁶ At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. ¹⁷ But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen

There are **Bibles** in front of you

And a sermon **outline**

I encourage to have your **Bibles opened** up at **Joshua chapter 14**

Let me pray first...

Context

[Slide-Context]

So far in the book of **Joshua**, we've seen how Joshua and God's people, the Israelites, conquered the land of **Canaan**—the land God promised to **Abraham** around 2000 BC.

It has taken some 600 years for that promise to be fulfilled.

Last week, we saw how God gave His people their land inheritance. Now the land has to be distributed among the tribes of Israel.

This week – in Joshua chapter 14 – we see **wholehearted faith in action.**

That's the theme running through the whole chapter – **wholehearted faithfulness**

It's a **complete absolute sincere faith that is free from doubt** – a faith that perseveres and endures regardless of circumstances

This expression "**wholehearted faith**" is repeated 3 times in verses 8, 9 and 14.

Whenever God repeats something in His Word – we should sit up and pay attention.

We first see this wholehearted faith demonstrated by Eleazar the priest, and Joshua and the tribal leaders as they faithfully obey God's instructions. Then, even more powerfully, we see it in the life of a man called Caleb.

Our first point this morning is – **Wholehearted Faith - Obeys God's Word** – that's Joshua 14 verses 1 to 5

[Slide-1st Point]

Wholehearted Faith Obeys God's Word (Joshua 14:1-5)

In verses 1 to 5 the 12 tribes of Israel are given their land inheritance by Eleazer the priest, Joshua, and the heads of the tribal clans.

The land is allocated **to nine and half tribes on the west side of the Jordan** – and land is allocated **to two and half tribes on the east side of the Jordan.**

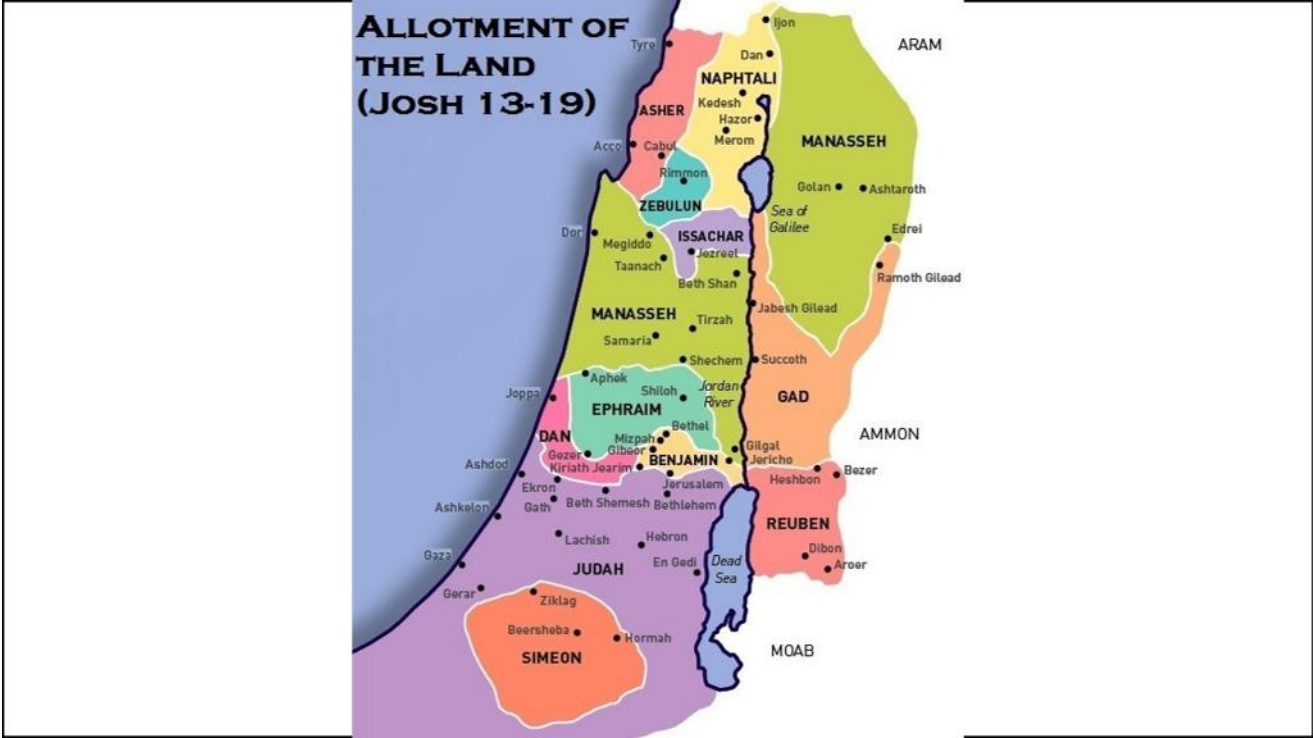
This was done it says in v2 – in exactly the way – *the Lord commanded through Moses* (see Numbers 32 and 34)

In other words Eleazer, Joshua and the tribal leaders carefully **obeyed God’s Word** previously given to Moses.

They could have done things their own way – after all, Moses is long gone – but instead they remained faithful and **obeyed God’s Word!**

[Slide-Map]

Explain Map



[Slide-Tribes]

Tribe	Land Allotted
Reuben	East of the Jordan
Simeon	West of the Jordan
Levi	No land allotted
Judah	West of the Jordan
Dan	West of the Jordan
Naphtali	West of the Jordan
Gad	East of the Jordan
Asher	West of the Jordan
Issachar	West of the Jordan
Zebulun	West of the Jordan
Joseph	Split into two tribes Ephraim and Manasseh
Benjamin	West of the Jordan
Ephraim	West of the Jordan
Manasseh	Half of the tribe given land on East Half of the tribe given land on West

Here's how the tribal allocations worked

The Land was divided among the twelve tribes of Israel – which were named after the 12 sons of Jacob (aka Israel)

Explain Table

Note - the tribe of Levi did not receive a tribal land. The Levites served as priests in the tabernacle and later in the temple. As we saw last week, the LORD Himself was their inheritance, and the Levites were supported through the tithes and offerings of God's people. However, as verse 4 explains, they were given towns to live in, together with pasturelands for their flocks and herds

Note also - Joseph himself did not receive a separate tribal inheritance. Instead, back in Genesis 48, Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as his own. From that point on, Ephraim and Manasseh each became a tribe in Israel. As a result, Joseph effectively received a double portion of the inheritance through his two sons.

I suppose you could say Jacob never learned his lesson about showing favouritism!

You might wonder, "***Why should we be interested in all these tribes?***"

Because the story of these tribes shows us something about the way God works.

For example, Joseph was Jacob's favourite son. Humanly speaking, we might expect the promised Messiah, Jesus, to come from Joseph's tribe—or perhaps from the priestly tribe of Levi.

But that's not what God chose.

As we read on through the Bible, we discover that Jesus' family line comes through the tribe of Judah—a man whose life was marked by some shameful failures.

Knowing something about the tribes reminds us that God often chooses the most unlikely people to accomplish His purposes. His plans are not based on human status, popularity or achievement, but on His sovereign grace.

And that's an encouragement for all of us...

In fact, it's probably why you're stuck with me for a little while longer!

[Slide-Application]

Application

There are some **applications** for us here about being **obeying God's Word**

1. **We must trust God's Word even when it doesn't fully make sense – God knows best!** Joshua distributed the land according to God's instructions – not according to what seemed easiest. Likewise we must trust God's wisdom

over our own wisdom. We must obey God's Word even when our society and culture says otherwise. We must believe God's commands are for our good!

2. **We must be faithful in the ordinary responsibilities of life.** Joshua wasn't leading battles here – he was simply administering land. Wholehearted faith isn't only seen in dramatic moments. It is seen in faithfully doing all of today's task for God's glory no matter how mundane. Whether we're parents, employees, retirees, students, or church members, God calls us to faithful obedience.

3. **We must obey God's Word completely.**

Are there parts of God's Word we gladly obey and others we ignore?

Wholehearted faith doesn't pick and choose what to obey.

If our car starts once every three days, would we say it was reliable?

If our fridge stops working for a day or two every month, would we say "Oh well, it works most of the time?"

If we pay our mortgage 10 months out of 12 – would our bank say we were a reliable customer?

If we read our Bibles once a month – pray when we want something – and come to worship two Sundays a month – would we expect God to say we are committed to Him and have wholehearted faith?

You see, we expect faithfulness and reliability from the things and people around us. Doesn't God expect the same from us? The problem is we can see ourselves as volunteers for God rather than as duty bound servants of God.

For a volunteer, almost anything seems acceptable. For a servant of God who is duty bound, wholehearted faithfulness is expected!

As Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments."

4. **Our obedience must be for the long haul.** Joshua was over 90 years old.

After all those battles, he didn't think "*I've done enough*". He continued to obey. For us: we don't retire from obeying and serving Jesus. We finish well. We keep worshipping, praying, serving and encouraging others!

[Slide-2nd Point]

Our **second point** this morning is – **Wholehearted Faith - Trusts God's Promises** – that's Joshua 14 verses 6 to 15

Wholehearted Faith – Trust's God's Promises (Joshua 14:6-15)

In verses 6 to 12 – a man named Caleb comes to Joshua and reminds Joshua of a promise God made to him – through Moses.

You see back in the wilderness Moses had sent 12 spies into the Land of Canaan to report back on what the land was like. Caleb and Joshua were two of those spies. You can read about this in Numbers 13 and 14.

At the time, Caleb was 40 years old.

Caleb and Joshua were the only ones of the 12 spies who came back with a positive attitude – and believed in God's Promise that He would deliver them the Land – and believed that God would go before them and help them take the land.

The other 10 spies – were super negative and were afraid of the giants of the Land – and as verse 8 says these other 10 spies *made the hearts of the people melt in fear!* But not Caleb – verse 8 says - Caleb *followed the Lord His God wholeheartedly.*

Because of His faith in God's promises – v9 – Moses promised Caleb '*the land on which your feet walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever* – why? Because Caleb *followed the Lord his God wholeheartedly*

You see - **Caleb saw God as bigger than the giants – whereas the other 10 spies and the people saw the giants bigger than God!**

And because of the 10 spies' lack of faith and the people's subsequent lack of faith and refusal to occupy the Promised Land of Canaan – the Israelites spent **40 years wandering in the wilderness instead of going into the Promised Land!**

But Caleb's faith is so strong – that now – in vv10-11 – 45 years later – He is 85 years old but he feels as strong as he did when he was 40 years old – and he is still ready to go into battle and fight!

Boldy – v12 – Caleb asks Joshua to keep the promise Moses made all those years ago – and give him the Hill Country of Judah where these giant Anakites live. You see, Caleb is not afraid of these giants – because as Caleb says "*with the Lord helping me, I will drive them out just as God said*"

You see – Caleb trusts God's promises completely

And Caleb's trust in God's promise is rewarded

See vv13-14 – Joshua blessed Caleb and gave him Hebron as his inheritance.

Why?

Because Caleb *followed the Lord, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly*.

And v15 – Hebron originally belonged to the giants – the Anakites!

But that's no problem to Caleb because He trusts God's promise that God will go before him!

[Slide-Application]

Application

Again, there are some **applications** for us here about obeying God's Word

1. We must trust in God's timing. Caleb waited **45 years** for God's promise to be fulfilled. He didn't become bitter or conclude that God had forgotten him.

- Sometimes we want immediate answers, but God is rarely in a hurry.
- Some prayers and promises take years to unfold.
- God's delays are not God's denials.

2. We must trust in God's faithfulness despite changing circumstances

Everything around Caleb had changed:

- Moses had died
- His fellow spies didn't trust God
- The Israelites disobeyed God and were made to wander in the wilderness for 40 years
- An entire generation of Israelites passed away.
- Years of warfare had followed.

But God's promise hadn't changed – Caleb persevered in faith.

For us

- Our circumstances may change – we get older.
- Governments may change.
- Our health may change.
- But God's promises do not.

3. We must trust God rather than our own strength

Caleb says, "*With the LORD helping me...*"

His confidence isn't ultimately in being 85 and still being strong, but his confidence is in God's presence.

For us...

- We often ask, "Am I strong enough?"
- But faith asks, "Is God faithful enough?"
- Our confidence should not be in ourselves but in the Lord who goes with us.

4. We must trust God enough to attempt difficult things

Caleb didn't ask for the easiest land.

He asked for Hebron—the hill country where the giant Anakites still lived.

For us

- Wholehearted faith doesn't seek the safest option.
- It is willing to obey God even when the path is difficult.
- Sometimes God calls us to forgive, to witness, to serve, or to step into challenging situations, trusting that He is with us.

5. We must trust God's promises until the end

Caleb never stopped believing what God had said.

Likewise we must keep holding onto God's promises – like...

- Jesus will never leave us or forsake us.
- If we confess our sins – Jesus is faithful and will cleanse from all unrighteousness through His death on the Cross
- Jesus forgives all who come to Him.
- Jesus is preparing a place in Heaven for all who believe in Him.
- Jesus will return one day!

- We have an eternal inheritance waiting for us.

Those promises sustain us through suffering, disappointment and old age.

The light-globe for me this week is - what drives Caleb on is that he is **totally unashamed of his faith!**

Before worship started this morning – we play a YouTube song by Matthew West called “**Unashamed**”

The lyrics are quite powerful

Three brothers in a fire [that's Daniel's friends – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego]

Willing to die for their faith

But You were with them in the fire

And they walked out the next day

And Daniel met a lion

Because he chose to pray

But You shut the mouth of that lion

And he walked out the next day

Then chorus says...

So, what's gonna be said of me

When it's all said and done?

Will I stand for my beliefs

Or will I turn around and run?

Well, let the whole world hear me say

I'm unashamed

Of the gospel of Jesus Christ

And the truth that changed my life

For the name above all names

I'm unashamed

And I will live my faith out loud

Take a stand and stand my ground

For the One who took my shame

I'm unashamed

(pause)

What about us?

Can we show that same wholehearted faith?

Can we make a stand and say we are unashamed of the Gospel of Jesus?

Or will we turn around and run?

(pause)

[Slide-3rd Point]

Our third point this morning is – **Wholehearted Faith - Finishes Well Looking**

Towards God's Reward – that's in our NT passage from 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

[Please turn there now]

Wholehearted Faith – Finishes Well Looking Towards God's Reward (2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18)

The Apostle Paul is coming to the end of his life and he writes this letter to his young protégé Timothy!

Paul says in v6 – it's like his life has been a sacrifice to God on an altar – and Paul knows he's coming close to the end of his life

But Paul – just like Caleb in our Joshua passage - Paul has persevered in his faith – v7 – He says – *I've fought the good fight, I finished the race, I've kept the faith!*

Paul sees – again like Caleb – he has finished his journey of faith well – and he looks towards the reward he will receive in Heaven – v8 - *a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge*, will reward Paul with!

Caleb also received a reward of his inheritance - the Hill Country of Hebron – whereas Paul will receive an eternal inheritance!

Then moving down to v16

Paul describes a time he remembers when he was in court defending his faith in Jesus – and everyone had deserted him. This is similar to how Caleb would have felt – only Joshua shared Caleb's faith – the other 10 spies and the whole of the Israelites didn't share Caleb's faith and rejected Caleb's spy report – and Caleb suffered the consequences of the Israelites' lack of faith and disobedience by having to wander around the wilderness for 40 years.

But Paul – v17 – wasn't on his own – neither was Caleb! As Paul says – *the Lord stood at his side – gave him strength – and even delivered him from the lions' den.*

In fact, Paul shows the same confidence as Caleb – which comes from wholehearted faith – and Paul confidently says in v18 – *The Lord will rescue me*

from every evil attack and will bring me safely to His Heavenly Kingdom forever!

Caleb and Paul finish life spiritually well and aren't they both in the Bible as examples of faith – so that we might imitate their wholehearted faith?

[Slide-Application]

Application

Again, there are some **applications** for us here about finishing well and looking towards God's Reward.

1. Finish well, not just start well. Paul doesn't say, "*I started the race.*"

He says: "*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*"

Many people begin the Christian life enthusiastically; however wholehearted faith perseveres to the end. It's about finishing well!

Finish well...

- Keep trusting Jesus.
- Keep reading God's Word
- Keep praying.
- Keep gathering with God's people.
- Keep serving.
- Keep sharing the gospel.
- Don't drift spiritually.

2. What spiritual legacy are we leaving?

Moses and Joshua influenced Caleb.

Caleb influenced the next generation of Israelites.

Paul influenced young Timothy.

- If someone followed our example, would they grow closer to Jesus?
- Will our children, grandchildren, or younger believers remember our wholehearted faith?
- What will people say about our faith when our race is finished?

"The greatest inheritance we leave our family isn't money or possessions—it's a life that has wholeheartedly followed the Lord."

3. Encourage the next generation

Joshua learned from Moses.

Caleb stood beside Joshua.

Paul mentored Timothy.

Wholehearted faith is meant to be passed on.

For us – we must...

- Pray for younger Christians.
- Encourage them.
- Teach them God's Word.
- Invite them into ministry.
- Show them what faithful perseverance looks like.

4. Keep our eyes on the reward

Paul wasn't motivated merely by duty.

He looked forward to "*the crown of righteousness*" in Heaven

Caleb looked to his inheritance; Paul looked to an even greater inheritance.

For us – we must...

- Live for eternity rather than temporary comfort.
- Don't measure success by wealth, health or popularity.
- Measure success in life by our faithfulness.

5. The Lord will never abandon His people

Everyone else deserted Paul.

But in v17 – Paul says "*The Lord stood by me.*"

For us...

- Friends may disappoint us.
- Family may fail us.
- Churches may hurt us.
- But Jesus never abandons His people.

Conclusion

To finish up then...

Joshua obeyed God's Word wholeheartedly.

Caleb trusted God's promises wholeheartedly.

Paul finished his race wholeheartedly.

The question for us is not simply, "**How did they live?**"

The question is, "**How will we live?**"

Will those who come after us see a wholehearted faith that points them to Jesus?

[Slide-2 Timothy 4:18]

Let me finish with this wonderful promise from 2 Timothy 4:18

"The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To Him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen"

Let's pray...

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the example of Caleb, who followed you wholeheartedly and trusted your promises throughout his life. Help us to have the same faith, courage, and perseverance. Keep us from growing weary or complacent, but strengthen us to continue serving you faithfully, whatever our age or circumstances. Thank you that all your promises are sure in the Lord Jesus Christ. Help us to trust you, obey you, and look forward to the inheritance you have prepared for your people. In Jesus' Name. Amen.