

Episode: God and His Family No. 10

Narrator: Caleb

Primary Scriptures: Numbers 14:24

Story Summary: Following God wholeheartedly

Location: Israel

Time: circa 1500 BC

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Numbers 14:24

The twelve spies return from the Promised Land. They describe the land as being incredibly productive, but ten of them warn against invading the land and facing the inhabitants. The people decide to follow their advice instead of being obedient to God. God gets angry and sentences the people to wander in the wilderness until the rebels die.

The two spies that want the people to follow God are Joshua and Caleb. God rewards them by allowing them to eventually enter the Promised Land. This is what God says of Caleb, “But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.”¹ Later, Moses said that Joshua also followed God wholeheartedly.²

Can you imagine God saying that about you? Not only are you his servant, but you are a special servant. You have a different spirit from everybody else because you follow God wholeheartedly. Apparently following God wholeheartedly has always been a special, differentiating quality.

It’s not hard to see wholehearted in someone’s life. Think of an avid sports fan, a gamer, someone who can only think of making money. Their passion is all they think about. Everything else exists to help them follow their passion.

Whether that exact word is used or not, in the Bible, God often gives approval to those who follow him wholeheartedly and disapproves of those who do not. For instance, one of the reasons God hates for us to follow idols of any kind is that they keep us from following and serving him wholeheartedly. Think of Jesus’ warning that nobody can serve two masters, because you will eventually love one and despise the other.

In Ephesians 6:5-8, Paul addresses slaves who have become Christians. These slaves have no choice but to serve their earthly masters, but Paul urges them to do better than that. He tells them to, “Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people.”

The only way to serve God appropriately is to do it wholeheartedly.

¹ Numbers 14:24

² Numbers 32:12