



*"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16*

## **The Challenge Of Our Heritage**

**By Glenn Griffith**

(selected from "No Uncertain Sound" by Rev. H. E. Schmul)

"And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." (Numbers 13:30).

In the setting of this scripture before us we see a group of men chosen from each tribe to explore a vast land, which God had given to them to possess as an everlasting heritage. They have returned to report to Moses and the assembled tribes of Israel what they have found and the challenge of possessing it.

The will of God is always the greatest challenge that can come to a person. It is no different now. A misunderstanding at this point or a drawing back will not only defeat the individual but it will bring hardship upon the whole group to whom the challenge has come.

Regardless of what attitude is taken or what decisions may be made by man, God's will remains the same, and He expects it to be carried out in its fullness, or tragedy will follow.

Twelve men were selected to view the land. Ten of them backed up and brought back a discouraging testimony, but there were two men who accepted the challenge, and were willing to go against the majority and take their stand for the will of God. While the ten were bringing a discouraging report, Caleb who had pressed his way to where he had seen the great inheritance stretched out in a beautiful panorama before him, and had climbed a mountain and found its fruit and had eaten of its grapes and pomegranates and had tasted its sparkling springs of pure water, sprang to his feet and shouted above the noise of the defeated spies and stilled the people and said, "let us go up at once and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome it." God never asks the impossible in His will for any person, but makes them able to possess it.

It was this glorious testimony that changed what seemed to be hopeless experience into a victory for Caleb, and later a victory for the whole generation of the children of Israel. Remember, the challenge was not just a claiming of the land or the blessing, but a possession of the land. After they had crossed its borders, the great will of God stretched out before them. Only the ground their feet trod upon was given them. Many start out alright, but when the challenge comes to walk in the light, and keep possessing new territory of experience, and keep their identity clear as holiness folk they back up and make excuses, and compromise the real experience, that makes the difference between holiness people and holy people.

It means everything to maintain our doctrine of holiness and keep our true identity as humble dwellers and courageous possessors of Canaan. Many lose their identity as

holiness folk by becoming lopsided and placing the emphasis on one phase of identification to the neglect of others, and thereby bringing an evil report of the experience of holiness and causing some to turn down the experience and fail to enter the land of Canaan.

A Christian is always surrounded by a certain atmosphere of humility which comes from his constant communion with God, and the leadership of the Holy Ghost, and the patient suffering of daily persecution. There is a strange unearthly glory that accompanies what he says and does His influence counts for Christ and makes souls hungry. His presence puts a deep sense of conviction upon them because of their disobedience. This glory and spirit of humility are the marks of identification, and without them a Samson becomes as other men, and loses his strength and testimony and becomes empty, wisting not that "the Lord has departed from him."

The challenge of holiness is not just standards, these should not be the outstanding marks identifying us as God's people. But the challenge is to keep the standards, with the glory of God and our lives saturated with His presence. I may dress strictly according to the Word, and *we should*, for there is no such thing as a worldly Christian. (1 John 2:15). I may conscientiously pay my tithe, and keep the Sabbath as all Christians do. I may visit the sick, and run errands of mercy, but really these are not the challenge of my Christian experience. The challenge is do I measure up in all these while God's glory is upon me with a sense of His glorious presence in tenderness and with a burden of sincere concern for those who are failing. This is the challenge! Otherwise, though I may do all these things and not have Divine love, that melting presence of the Spirit, I am become as "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." The challenge of holiness is not the fact that we struggled through the day or through the hardship, temptation and test while we murmured and complained about how hard it was to make it, and thereby testified for Satan and his power. But the challenge is to be able to keep our sufferings to ourselves, that Christ may be glorified in us. (I Peter 6:10). Stephen, when he was being stoned to death for something he was not guilty of, said, "I see the heavens open and Christ standing on the right hand of God." Some in the crowd said, "behold his face shineth like an angel's." Paul declared "I count all things but dung, that I may know him, and the fellowship of his suffering." (Phil. 3.) This may appear to some as preaching a little close, but it only shows that the blessed Holy Ghost can see us through to victory. Otherwise it is but human will worship, and will fail in the crucible and cause one to lose his identity and bring reproach upon the cause of Christ.

May God, the blessed Holy Ghost, so possess our lives, that it will be our glorious spirit of victory, and our concern for a troubled world and lost souls that will reveal our identity while at the same time we do not sacrifice any of the standards of holy precepts. The world sees both extremes; the drastic contender for standards, and also the worldling who has no standards and yet professes to be a Christian.

Lost souls are looking for someone who is victorious, consistent and humble in every circumstance. These will prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God, "even your sanctification." I believe God is gathering the remnant of the scattered sheep of the house of Israel. Not just to form another church group or denomination, but to get them together, and form a nucleus for His army to press forward His cause in this final battle before the rapture.

The Bible Missionary Church is not forming just to make a place of refuge for hungry, persecuted saints alone, but to gather together some faithful laborers, who will thrust in their sickles into His harvest before, "the summer is ended, and the harvest is past," and this neglected generation goes to the judgment without the true message of deliverance from the carnal mind, that wrecker of men from the beginning.

Here is the challenge. God help me to stand in the gap as we stand with our backs against the sunset of the dispensation of Grace. Help me to pray until my heart burns within me to do His will and to weep over precious souls for whom He died. This is my prayer; Oh God help me to pray until the place is shaken where I am. Help me to pray until a real Pentecost blazes in my soul, and until my entire past, present, and future, my reputation, my all rests surrendered to God, to be hurled against this mighty foe to defeat him in the hearts of men. Help me to pray until my faith embraces a warm Calvary; until the Word of God will not only be my source of authority, but the answer to the sin question in every heart I contact. Help me to pray until I realize the value of a lost soul slipping into hell. Let me pray till I am moved with such compassion for the lost, that I will forget the price of rescue, and go into all the world and preach the Gospel.

Help me to pray until messages both negative and positive burn within my heart and that peculiar unction of the Holy One comes upon me. Then let me preach. Let me preach. Let me preach the Word! Let me preach it in the streets, in missions, in little churches and big churches. Help me to preach it until souls will be convicted of their sins and will quit the sin business. Help me preach it until the show crowd, the television crowd will become honest with God and their own conscience and pray through to victory. Yes, dear Lord, let me preach till we have answered the challenge of carnality, and Thy Word has destroyed it in the human heart. All this I ask in the name of Christ. Amen.

It is always easier to run than to stand in the gap. It is easier to drift with the liberal church, than to pray and stand in the gap. It is easier to take whatever comes than to be faithful in the secret place. If we quit preaching against sin, and don't name the sins, if we fail to stand against the little so-called non-essentials such as wedding rings, and jewelry of all kinds, lodges, and any other form of carnality and disobedience we will soon cool off and become short of the glory and robbed of our burden as prayers. We will lose the victory in our testimonies and the ministry will lose the real message of deliverance.

All these things present the real challenge of our heritage. The gulf is going to widen between the true Israel and the world. It will not become easier to preach the old fashioned gospel. The pressure from carnal brethren and sin will intensify as the battle rages on till Jesus comes. The danger, (If we don't keep in the shadow of the Almighty), will be to either get bitter or go along with things on a nominal level.

Here is the test and challenge of a true holy people and leadership. We can only do the task with broken hearts and vital truth. God help me to fight with compassion and earnestness of heart and life, and accept the challenge of this tragic hour when men are failing and make full proof of my ministry until Jesus comes or says, "Well done, come home."

