

Caleb—The Man For The Times

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon presents Caleb as a model believer whose wholehearted, sincere, and joyful obedience to God exemplifies the faithful follower needed in every generation.

Scripture: Numbers 14:24, Matthew 23:23, Hebrews 12:1, John 10:4, Colossians 3:23, Genesis 32:24-26, Revelation 3:16
Topics: "Faithful Obedience", "Spiritual Courage"

Description

In this compelling sermon, C.H. Spurgeon explores the life and character of Caleb, highlighting his unwavering faith, wholehearted obedience, and joyful service to God. Spurgeon challenges believers to emulate Caleb's 'another spirit'—a spirit of courage, sincerity, and complete devotion. Through biblical exposition and vivid illustrations, the sermon calls Christians to a deeper, more faithful walk with God, promising blessings to those who follow fully and cheerfully.

Transcript

"But My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit in him and has followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land he went. And his seed shall possess it." Numbers 14:24.

It is a rough name that—"Caleb." Most translators say it signifies "a dog." But what matters a man's name? Possibly the man himself was somewhat rough—many of the heartiest of men are so. As the unpolished oyster yet bears within itself the priceless pearl, so oftentimes ruggedness of exterior covers worth. A dog, moreover, is not all badness, though, "Without are dogs and sorcerers." It has this virtue, that it follows its master. And therein this Caleb was well-named. For never dog so followed his master as Caleb followed his God.

As we have seen the faithful dog following his master when he is on horseback through mud and mire and dirt, for many a weary mile, even though the horses heels might wound him, so Caleb keeps close to God. And even if stoning threatens him, yet is he well content to follow the Lord fully. The name, however, has another signification and we like it rather better—it means "All heart." Here was a fitting surname for the man, whose whole heart followed his God. He says himself that he brought a report of the land according to all that was in his heart.

He was a man of a healthy and mighty spirit. He did nothing heartlessly. His spirit was not the Laodicean luke-warmness, which is neither hot nor cold, which God spits out of His mouth—it was a spirit of holy heat, of noble daring. If I may not call him lion-hearted, never lion had a braver heart than he. Many

mortals appear to have no heart. They are like corporations of which we are often told that a corporation has a head—does it not have a new mayor every year? And yet who ever saw it blush?

It certainly has a mouth, for it swallows much—and hands, for it can grasp much—and feet, for it takes long strides. But whoever heard of a corporation with either heart or conscience? In the same manner it may be said of many persons—they have a head to understand and think, and feet to move and hands to act, but heart of compassion and a feeling heart they have not. Doubtless you have seen—doubtless you have met persons without hearts. The moment you come into their company you perceive what they are, as readily as the voyager on the Atlantic knows when there is an iceberg in the neighborhood—by the sudden chill which comes over him.

You shake the man's hand—it drops into your hand as cold as a dead fish. The man's blood is cold as a December frost. You talk with him, but no effort on your part can stir the frozen current of his soul. You begin to speak to him about religion—which he professes to love so much—his words are few, his syllables faint, for his heart is not in the matter. Others we have the privilege of knowing—I trust there are many such in this community—who cannot talk of Jesus without emotion—

"Their pulse with pleasure bounds, The Master's name to hear."

If they sing, they wake up their glory, saying, with David, "Awake, psaltery and harp. I myself will awake right early." If they pray, it is the wrestling prayer of Jacob at the brook Jabbok. And if they serve their God, they carry out the words of the Apostles, "Whatever you do, do it heartily, as unto God and not unto man." It is a hearty Caleb, then. We will rather interpret his name this way than the other. But if we put both together, he shall be a dog for faithfully following his God, but he shall be all heart, because he so fully follows his Lord.

There are three things about Caleb worthy of consideration, then—first, his faithful following. Secondly, his favored reward. And thirdly, his inner character—that which was the secret source of his following God, namely, that "he had another spirit."

I. First, then, let this brave veteran stand before us. Let us look at him and learn something of HIS FAITHFUL FOLLOWING OF HIS GOD. Perceive, Beloved, he never went before his God. That is presumption. The highest point to which the true Believer ever comes is to walk with God, but never to walk before Him. It is true that we walk before the Lord in the land of the living, but that is in another sense, meaning under His eyes. We never run before God so as to outrun His Providence and become the directors of our own steps.

They who travel before the cloud will soon find other clouds lowering upon them. Those who leave the fiery pillar and will be their own guides, shall soon be in the fire, without a guide to bring them out again. We ought to follow the Lord. The sheep follow the shepherd. "He puts forth His own sheep," says Christ, "and goes before them, and they follow Him." They follow as the soldier follows the captain—he points the road, leads the van and bears the thick of the danger—while the faithful warrior keeps close behind.

They follow as the disciple follows the Master, not teaching, nor discussing, nor disputing, but sitting at His feet, believing that when He leads in the way of knowledge, it is a true and a right way, whereas if we seek to be wise beyond what is written, we make unto ourselves pits and traps and fall into a snare. Caleb followed the Lord. Many others do the same, but then they can not win that adverb, which is Caleb's golden medal. He followed the Lord, "fully," says one text, "wholly," says another.

Some of us follow the Lord, but it is a great way off, like Peter, or now and then as did Saul the king. We are not constant. We have not given our whole heart to God. The essence, then, of the man's faithful following lies in the adverb—"fully." And here, by your leave, in explaining this word "wholly." I shall follow the explanation of good Matthew Henry. I cannot think of a better, nor even of one so good, myself.

1. He followed the Lord wholly, that is, first of all, he followed Him universally, without dividing. Whatever his Master told him to do, he did—

"In all the Lord's appointed ways His journey he pursued."

He did not say, "I will perform this duty and neglect the other. I will be faithful to my conscience and to my God upon this point, but that shall be left unto another day." He took the Commandments as he found them and if they were ten he did not desire to make them nine. Nor did he want to change their order and put that second which God had put first. He did not wish to divide the commands. What God had joined together, he did not desire to put asunder. He followed the Lord without picking and choosing, being universally obedient to his Master's Law.

Brethren, I wish we could say the same of all professed Christians. You see Caleb was quite as ready to fight the giants as he was to carry the clusters. We have a host who are ready for sweet duties. Pleasant exercises and spiritual engagements which bring joy and peace are always very acceptable. But as for the fighting of giants—how many say, "I pray you have me excused." To defend Christ's cause against adversaries, to submit themselves to rebuke, to go up single-handed and fight against the Lord's foes—from this the many will draw back and we are afraid there are some that draw back unto perdition, because they have never had the perfect heart given to them which is obedient to God in all His will.

If you have a servant who will choose which of your commands she will obey, she is rather the mistress than the servant. If you, dear Brother, shall say concerning the Lord's will, "I will do this and I will not do that," you do in fact make yourself master. The spirit of rebellion is in you, you have already erred and strayed from your Lord's ways and set up the standard of revolt. Mind that you do not pierce yourself through with many sorrows. Some excuse themselves for neglecting duties on the ground that they are non-essential—as if all duty was not essential to the perfect follower of Christ.

"They are unimportant," says the man, "they involve nothing." Whereas it often happens that the apparently unimportant duty is really the most important of all. Many a great lord, in the olden times, has given up his land on copyhold to his tenant. And perhaps the fee which was to be annually paid was to bring a small bird, or a peppercorn—in some cases it has been the bringing of a turf, or a green leaf. Now, if the tenant should on the annual day refuse to do his homage and say it was too trifling a thing to bring a peppercorn to the lord of the manor in fee, would he not have forfeited his estate? Thus he would have been setting himself up as superior owner and asserting a right which his feudal lord would at once resist.

It is even so—to quote a single instance—in the matter of Believer's Baptism. When the Believer says, "Well, surely this is but a small thing, I may safely neglect it," does he not therein deny unto his Sovereign Lord and Master that act of homage which, though it is simple in itself, is nevertheless full of meaning, because it is an acknowledgment of the superior rights of the great King? Who told you it was nonessential? Who bade you neglect it? Surely it must be a spirit of darkness that talked with you!

The Jew of old must not neglect circumcision. His child shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel unless the painful rite be performed. He must not refuse the paschal supper, for if he does, the destroying

angel shall smite his household. And in that Passover everything must be observed. Not a bone must be broken. The creature must not be eaten raw, nor sodden at all with water. It must be roasted in the fire. It must be eaten with bitter herbs. There are minute particulars given and every one of these having the solemn command of God upon them are to be carefully observed by the children of Israel throughout all generations.

Surely it must be so with Christian ordinances and with the commands of the King of Heaven. We cannot violate them with impunity. The spirit which would prompt us to neglect one of the least of them is of the devil and leads down to Hell—a spirit of partial obedience is a spirit of radical disobedience. The old Prophet did but eat and drink at Bethel and that, too, as he thought, upon prophetic authority, and yet the lion slew him because he rebelled against the express bidding of God.

We are not to imitate the Pharisee who tithed the mint, anise and cummin, and then neglected the weightier matters of the Law, but we are to remember that Jesus said, "These things ought you to have done and not to have left the other undone." So that mint and anise and cummin, are still to be tithed. And still in the little as well as in the great our obedience to God is to be carried out. Take care, dear Friends, that, like Caleb, you follow the Lord fully, that is, universally, without dividing.

Now may I put a question of conscience to all around me? Is there not something that I know to be my Master's will which I have not done? Brothers and Sisters, is there not some command which as yet you have not obeyed? Some self-denying duty which you have shirked, some holy engagement for the good of your fellow men, or for your Lord's glory, which you have carelessly avoided? If it is so, do, I pray you, see to it, for you can never have the blessing of Caleb till you have the complete and universal spirit of obedience which Caleb had.

2. But secondly, Caleb followed the Lord fully, that is, sincerely without dissembling. He was no hypocrite. He followed the Lord with his whole heart. One of the safest tests of sincerity is found in a willingness to suffer for the cause. I suppose that the twelve spies met each other in the south part of the land and held a little consultation as to what should be the report they would bring up. Like twelve jurymen they were now to bring in their verdict and ten of them were agreed—"It is a land that flows with milk and honey, but it eats up its inhabitants. It is full of giants with cities walled up to Heaven and it is impossible for us to take possession of it."

Caleb and Joshua both dissent from that verdict. I cannot tell what were the arguments and the reasonings, what the bantering and the jests and the jeers, to which Caleb was exposed from the other ten princes. But we do know that when they came to give in their verdict Caleb dared to stand forth, alone, and declare that such was not his testimony. Joshua appears to have said nothing, probably from prudential reasons, because, being the servant of Moses, the people would attach less importance to what he said, arguing that he was sure to take part with Moses and would be biased by his superior.

Therefore Caleb stood out alone and took the brunt of the tumult. How courageous was that man, who had only numbered forty summers, to put himself in opposition to the other ten princes and declare in flat contradiction to them—"Let us go up. We are able to possess the land." When the people took up stones and Joshua was forced to speak with Caleb, it was with no small peril and required no little mental courage to stand up amidst the insults and jeers of the crowd and still to bring up a good report of the land. Caleb followed the Lord sincerely.

O Beloved, how many profess to follow God who follow Him without their hearts! The semblance of religion is often dearer to men than religion itself. As one says, many a man has spent five hundred pounds upon a picture of a beggar by Murillo, or a brigand by Salvator Rosa, who would not give a penny to a real beggar and go out of their wits at the sight of a brigand. The picture of religion, the outward name of it, men will give much to maintain. But the reality of religion—ah, that is quite a different thing.

Many of our Churches are surmounted with the Cross in stone, but how few of the worshippers care to take up the Cross of Christ daily and follow Him. We know religious men who are respected by the ungodly, not for their religion, but on account of some adventitious circumstance. It was not the religion itself they cared for. If you should take a bear in a cage into a town, men will pay their money to see it, but let it loose among them and they will pay twice as much money to get rid of it. So sometimes if a religious man has gift or ability, there are many who will regard and admire him, but not for his religion.

Let the religion itself come abroad in the daily actions of his life and then straightway they begin to abhor him. There is much false love to Jesus—much unhallowed profession. Let us remember, however, that the day is coming when all false profession will be destroyed. The fan in Christ's hands will leave none of the chaff remaining upon the wheat heap and the great fire will not suffer a single particle of dross to be unconsumed. Happy shall that man be whose faith was a real faith, whose repentance was sincere, whose obedience was true, who gave his heart, his whole heart to his Master's cause!

3. The third point is most noteworthy. Caleb followed the Lord wholly, that is, cheerfully without disputing. Those who serve God with a sad countenance, because they do what is unpleasant to them, are not His servants at all. Our God requires no slaves to grace His Throne. He is the Lord of the empire of love. The angels of God serve Him with songs, not with groans. And God loves to have the joyful obedience of His creatures. In fact I will venture to say that that obedience which is not cheerful is disobedience, for the Lord looks at the heart of a thing and if He sees that we serve Him from force and not because we love Him, He will reject our offering.

That service which is coupled with cheerfulness is hearty service, and therefore true. Take away joy from the Christian and you have taken away, I believe, that which is the test of his sincerity. If a man is driven to battle, he is no patriot, but he that marches into the fray with flashing eye and beaming face, singing, "It is sweet for one's country to die," proves himself to be sincere in his patriotism. Cheerfulness, again, makes a man strong in service. It is to our service what oil is to the wheels of a railway carriage. Without its proportion of oil, the axle soon grows hot and accidents occur. And if there is not a holy cheerfulness to oil our wheels, we shall not be able to serve God with anything like power.

The man who is cheerful in his service of God proves that obedience is his element. I have seen the sea birds in stormy weather flying over the land with their huge heavy flapping wings. What a contrast between them and the lark, which, as it mounts to Heaven makes its wings vibrate many times in a moment, while these heavy broad-winged creatures fly as if they could not fly. They are out of their element. They long till again they shall be swimming upon the sea.

Some men in the service of God are like these heavy swans. Their wing goes every now and then with a sort of dying flap—there is no sprightliness of life in them. They are out of their element. Now God will never receive at our hands an obedience which is not consistent with our nature. Understand me, if it were possible for a man with an unspiritual nature, with a fallen nature, to perform the very same work which is performed by a saint, his nature would mar his act. God looks at the nature from which the act comes, and

if He sees that it comes from a spiritual, renewed, regenerated nature, then He recognizes that obedience is our element and so accepts our service.

Let me put this question round among you all. Brothers and Sisters, do you serve the Lord cheerfully? Frequently people give to the cause of God because they are asked. A guinea is dragged out of them. Do you think God cares for your guinea? You might as well have kept it. No blessing can come to you. When you give to the cause of God, do it cheerfully. He that gives must not give grudgingly, or else he has offered an unacceptable offering unto God. When you come out to week night services, do you come because you should come, or do you love to come? This is the mark of the genuine child of God, the true Caleb—that he can sing—

"Make me to walk in Your commands It is a delightful road." The man has his heart right, he feels at home in the work of the Lord! Here is his joy—

"It is love that makes our cheerful feet In swift obedience move." Caleb was one of those who served the Lord cheerfully.

4. But now there is a fourth point, he followed the Lord constantly without declining. Having begun when he first started upon the search to exercise a truthful judgment, he persevered during the forty days of his spying and brought back a true report. Forty-five years he lived in the camp of Israel, but all that time he followed the Lord and never once consorted with murmuring rebels. And when his time came to claim his heritage at the age of eighty-five, the good old man is following the Lord fully. Still his speech betrays him. He shows a constant heart. God set his seal upon that man's soul in his youthful days and he remained his God's when gray hairs adorned his brow.

Beloved, how many professors fail in this respect? They follow the Lord by fits and starts. They go out from us because they are not of us. For if they had been of us, doubtless they would have continued with us. They leap into religion as the flying fish leaps into the air. They fall back again into their sins, as the same fish returns to its element. They make a great name for a time like the crackling of thorns, but lo, the flame has soon expired, for they are not like the miraculous bush which burned, God dwells not in them!

Caleb was kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. He could say with Jude, "Now unto Him who is able to keep me from falling, unto Him be honor and glory forever and ever." He was not as some are, who imitate the lame beggar who limped all day in the streets to gather money and then at night went to the thieves' kitchen, where all the dainty bits were brought out of the bag, the money flowed freely and the wine and the good cheer was bought. Then the rogue unloosed his lame leg and danced as merrily as the rest.

No, Caleb was not of this kind. He did not limp in virtue nor leap in vice. His walk was ever the same and the way was always straight. God had delivered him from dissimulation, and had given him constancy in its place. How brightly he shone when he was left alone, faithful among the faithless. Even Joshua for awhile is silent. But we may compare him, to use the metaphor of good old Gotthold—we may compare him to a tree. The wind had been blowing—it was a dreadful hurricane and Gotthold walked into a forest and saw many trees torn up by the roots.

He marveled much at one tree which stood alone and yet had been unmoved in the tempest. He said, "How is this? The trees that were together have fallen and this alone stands fast!" He observed that when the trees grow too closely they cannot send their roots into the earth—they lean too much upon each

other. But this tree, standing alone, had space to thrust its roots into the earth and lay hold on the rock and stones, and so when the wind came, it fell not. It was so with Caleb—he always would lay hold upon his God, not upon men. And so when the wind came, he stood.

I saw this morning a huge tree which stood by the water's edge but yesterday, blown into the large pond upon our common. Well might it fall during such a night, but there were other trees further from the water that stood fast. You know it is our prosperity, our mercy-side—it is where the water comes to the root, where the plenty comes. But the temptation comes, too, and we are ever weakest where perhaps we dreamt we were the strongest. Caleb was constant because he was a rooted man and even success did not overturn him. He was not one of those plants which spring up quickly because there is no depth of earth. He had a firm hold upon his God.

You know, my Sisters, how you wear your rings. I would that every Christian wore his graces after the same fashion. You wear not only the wedding ring, but the keeper, too. And every Christian should wear the keeper of constancy to guard the ring of his faith. Caleb had set a seal upon his heart and a bracelet upon his arm—his love was strong as death and endured even to the grave. He saw the Lord, he loved the Lord, he trusted the Lord. And for these reasons he followed the Lord wholly. Here I leave him, only asking you, dear Friends, to see to it that you have his holy perseverance. Therefore pray, "Hold You me up and I shall be safe," and trust yourself where Caleb trusted himself—in the hands of God.

I will give you those four subdivisions again: universally, without dividing. Sincerely, without dissembling. Cheerfully, without disputing. Constantly, without declining.

II. Now for the second point, which is CALEB'S FAVORED PORTION. In reward for his faithful following of his

Master, his life was preserved in the hour of judgment. The ten fell, smitten with plague, but Caleb lived. Blessed is the man who has the God of Jacob for his confidence—

"He that has made his refuge God Shall find a most secure abode; Shall walk all day beneath His shade, And there at night shall rest his head. What though a thousand at your side, At your right hand ten thousand died, Your God His chosen people saves Among the dead, amidst the graves."

If any man shall experience special deliverances, Caleb is he. If he follows God fully, God will fully take care of him. When you look to nothing but your Master's honor, your Master will look to your honor.

When Queen Elizabeth sent a certain merchant over to Holland, he complained to her, "If I do your Majesty's business, my own business will be ruined." "You do my business," said the Queen, "and I will see to your business." It is so with our God. "My servant, serve Me, and I will serve you." Caleb is willing to give his life for his Master, and therefore his Master gives him his life. There are many who seek their life that lose it. And there are some who lose it for Christ's sake, that find it to life eternal. Caleb was also comforted with a long life of vigor. At eighty-five he was as strong as at forty and still able to face the giants.

If there is a Christian man who shall have in his old age a vigor of faith and courage, it is the man who follows the Lord fully. I have in my mind's eye one who gave himself, while yet a young man, to his Master's cause. He has zealously served the Church in his day and generation and it is his privilege now to see the good of God's chosen. His heart is so glad at the sight of God's mercy that he is ready to say

with Simeon—"Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word: for my eyes have seen Your salvation."

We gain our old saints from among those faithful young ones. If ever we are to see among us noble veterans—champions of the age whose heads shall be crowned with gray hairs of honor—we must look for those who in the beginning of their days were hearty in their Master's cause, were universal in their obedience, thorough in their consecration to God. Experience, wisdom, Divine Grace are the gifts of our Lord Jesus to those who walk with zeal and earnestness in His ways.

Again, Caleb received as his reward great honor among his Brothers and Sisters. He was at least twenty years older than any other man in the camp except Joshua. How the mothers would hold up their little children in their arms to look at Caleb as he walked down the street! "All died," the mothers would say, "all died in Israel's host, except that man who walks yonder with steadfast tread. All died and their carcasses were buried in the wilderness, except that man and Joshua the son of Nun." At their council he would be regarded with as much reverence as Nestor in the assemblies of the Greeks. In their camps he would stand like another Achilles in the midst of the armies of Lacedaemon.

As king and sire he dwelt among men. As some mighty Alp lifts its head nearer to Heaven than all its compeers—its pure, snow-white head communing with celestial things—so this gray-headed old man must have seemed a towering summit in the midst of Israel's worthies! A Grace-made prime minister of the people of Israel after Joshua himself had departed. Well, Brothers and Sisters, such will God make of us if we give our hearts wholly to Him. I say, again, if we honor God He will honor us. "They that honor Me I will honor. They that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."

Inconsistent professors—men and women who may be Christians, but who never enter thoroughly into the Lord's work—are never honored in the Church. They must necessarily keep in the background. They are rather tolerated than admired. But warm-hearted spirits, zealous and full of life—these are the men who stand like Joseph's sheaf in the midst of his Brothers and Sisters' sheaves which do obeisance unto it.

Again—and you will think this is a strange thing to say—Caleb had the distinguished reward of being put upon the hardest service. That is always the lot of the most faithful servant of God. There were three huge warriors in Mount Hebron. No one will undertake to kill them except our good old friend Caleb. These Anakims, with their six toes on each foot and their six fingers on each hand, are to be upset and driven out. Who is to do it? If nobody else will offer himself, here is Caleb. No, he does not merely allow himself to be sent upon the service, but he craves permission to be allowed to take the place, the reason being because it was the worst task of the war and he panted to have the honor of it.

Grand old man! Would God you had left many of your like behind you. If there is some pleasant thing to do for Christ, how we scramble after the service. But if there is a front place in the battle, "Oh, let Brother So-and-So do it." Do you not notice the way most men decline the honor of special danger? "Our friend So-and-So is much better qualified for that. Let him take it." If we were true heroes we should each of us contend which should undertake the most hopeless, the most difficult, and the most dangerous task. Who wins the honor? Why the man that leads the forlorn hope!

But there are not many who will strive to have the privilege of going first. They are not quite so fond of being knocked off the ladder and sent headlong from the wall to have their brains knocked out on the ground—not quite so desirous of being blown to pieces by the batteries. But, truly, if we could rival even earthly soldiers in their bravery and self-sacrifice, it were well. Caleb had the distinguished honor of being

permitted to lead the van against the gigantic

Anakim. Follow the Lord fully and the devil himself will be afraid of you—keep close to your Lord and defy all the fiends of Hell.

Last Tuesday morning, when I left London to go to Worcester to preach, the fog was about as thick as I have ever seen it, but what did that matter? The engine had just to keep on the rails, stick fast to the metals and she was safe. There was no particular need of seeing, because the road was laid down. And when a Christian knows he is right, he may go straight on, fog or no fog. But when a man gets off the road, then he may well pause, for he may be in a ditch and no one knows how soon he may come to grief. Get your heart right and you are independent of weather. Get your soul right and you may defy the sharpest arrow of the Adversary. The Lord is with us, if we are with Him.

This grand old man in his after years had the honor of enjoying what he had once seen. He had only seen the land when he said, "We are able to take it." But others said, "No, no, no." Well, he lived not only to take it, but to enjoy it for himself. We get in some of our Churches—I say nothing of mine just now—certain reverend old gentlemen who might as well have gone to Heaven years ago, who if there is any enterprise to be undertaken, say, "Oh, no, no! It cannot be done." They sit down and figure away on a piece of paper with their pencil and say, "We have not enough money. It cannot be done."

Perhaps some youthful soldier of Christ in the army says, "It can be done. I am sure we can do it." But the good old man, having made up his mind never to walk by faith, stands to his watchword, "It is imprudent." That is the big word with which they try to knock out the brains of young Zeal—"imprudent, imprudent!" But thank God there are others of another sort, who though they grow gray, say, "Well, I do not know. I may be thought to be a boy in my old age, but I do believe that God will hear prayer and that if it is God's work we can do it." And the old man lays his hand on the young soldier's shoulder and bids him go on and God be with him.

That is the kind of Caleb I like! May such men live to see the reward of their confidence! Indeed they shall see that God is true to their faith and that He does reward those who dare to do hard things in confidence in His name. I may be speaking to some people from the country. You have got a minister down there but he wants to do a little more good than you like him to do. Now mind what you think. Stand back. If you cannot help him, let him alone. But I do pray you, on the other hand, endeavor to encourage him, cheer him on, for you will never win a Hebron for yourself or the Church if you are always talking about the giants and the difficulties and the dangers. There are no difficulties to the man who has faith enough to overcome them.

To conclude this point, good old Caleb left a blessing to his children. He had many sons, but he fought for them and carved out a portion for them all. And he had a daughter, too, whom he promised to give to wife, you will remember, to anyone who would smite Kirjath-Sepher. He was a man of such a kind that he did not like to have a man for a son-in-law who could not fight as well as himself. He delighted to see valor in young people and so he offered his daughter as a prize. When he had given his daughter, she came to him and asked for a double blessing.

She had the field and a south country—she would have the land of springs—and he gave her the blessing of the upper and the nether springs. If there is any man who shall be able to leave his children the blessing of the upper and nether springs, it is the man who follows the Lord fully. If I might envy any man, it would be the Believer who from his youth up has walked through Divine Grace according to his Lord's

Commandments and who is able, when his day comes, to scatter benedictions upon his rising sons and daughters and leave them with godliness which has the blessing of this life and that which is to come. The blessing of the upper and the nether springs, then, was the reward of good old Caleb.

There are some of us who are young in years, members of this Church, men and women, and we have before us, I hope, the opportunity, if God gives us Divine Grace, of becoming Calebs. And if the Lord should spare me as he spared Joshua, and spare you as he spared Caleb, we may yet, when our hairs are gray, do something, still, for the Lord our God, when those that fought the fight before us shall sleep among the clods of the valley. O for the Holy Spirit within us and the love of Jesus upon us, that we may be accepted in the Beloved!

III. And now, the last point of all—CALEB'S SECRET CHARACTER. The Lord says of him, "Because he has another spirit with him." He had another spirit—not only a bold, generous, courageous, noble and heroic spirit, but the Spirit and influence of God which thus raised him above human inquietudes and earthly fears. Therefore he followed God fully—literally he filled after him. God showed him the way to take and the line of conduct he must pursue—and he filled up this line, and in all things followed the will of his Master. Everything acts according to the spirit that is in it.

Yonder lamp gives no light. Why? It has no oil. Here is another. It cheers the darkness of the cell. Why? It is full of oil and oil is the mother of light. There are two huge bags of silk. One of them lies heavily upon the ground, the other mounts up towards the stars. The one is filled with carbonic-acid gas. It cannot mount, it acts according to the spirit that is in it. It has a heavy gas and there it lies. There is another full of hydrogen and it acts according to the spirit that is in it and up it goes. The light air seeks the lighter regions and up it mounts. Everything recording to its own order. The real way to make a new life is to receive a new spirit. There must be given us, if we would follow the Lord fully, a new heart and that new heart must be found at the foot of the Cross, where the Holy Spirit works through the bleeding wounds of Jesus.

Dear Friends, I would to God that we had, all of us, that which is the distinguishing mark of a right spirit, the spirit offaith. That spirit which takes God at His Word, reads His promise, and knows it to be true. He that has this spirit will soon follow the Lord fully. Unbelief is the mother of sin, but faith is the nurse of virtue. More faith, Lord, more simple childlike faith upon a precious Savior! Then a faithful spirit always begets a meek spirit and a meek spirit always begets a brave spirit. It is said of the wood of the elder tree that none is softer, but yet it is recorded of old that Venice was built upon piles of the elder tree because it will never rot.

And so the meek-spirited man who is gentle and patient lasts on bravely, holding his own against all the attacks of the destroying Adversary. The true Believer has also a loving spirit as the result of Jesus' Grace. He loves God, therefore he loves God's people and God's creatures. And having this loving spirit he has next a zealous spirit and so he spends and is spent for God and this begets in him a heavenly spirit. And so he tries to live in Heaven and to make earth a Heaven to his fellow men, believing that he shall soon have a Heaven for himself and for them, too, on the other side of the stream.

Such a spirit had good Caleb. We cannot imitate him till we get his spirit. We are dead until He quickens us. O that the Holy Spirit would lead us to go to Jesus just as we are and look up to Him and beseech Him to fulfill that great Covenant promise—"A new heart also will I give them, a right spirit will I put within them." You and I have not followed the Lord fully. What shall we do, then? First let us humbly repent. Caleb means a dog. Let us learn from a dog. When a dog has done amiss, and you take a stick and are

about to beat him, he will lie down on the ground and howl and creep to your feet and look up so piteously at you that you throw down your stick.

Now let us each do the same. Let us each be Calebs—dogs in this. Let us crouch at the feet of God's justice. Let us look up into the face of God's mercy and through Jesus Christ He will forgive us. Having done this, may He enable us to exercise a simple faith in Christ. As the child lives hanging upon the mother's breast and deriving its nourishment from the parent, so be it yours and mine to hang upon the wounds of our own dear Lord. And tonight when we come to His Table, let us eat His flesh and drink His blood, keeping close to His Person, receiving our life from the secret channels of His life, living upon Him.

Ah, if we live close to Jesus, we must be Calebs! He that is one with Jesus will follow God because Jesus is perfect in His following of His Father. And we, being parts of Him, shall be perfect, too. But the Holy Spirit's work must begin by bringing us to Jesus just as we are. God help us to trust Him as we are and then, by His Grace He will make us Calebs and keep us to the end. Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ch-spurgeon/caleb-the-man-for-the-times/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net