

Apart from Me You Can Do Nothing

Reliance Upon the Lord = A Focus for 2012

Jan 29, 2012

Vision - To Reach Our City

An Environment for Ministry to Thrive

- The question is not - "What Are You Going to Do for God?"
- The question is - "Lord what is it that YOU want to do?"

Apart from Me You Can Do Nothing

Acts 17:24-25 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

Isaiah 40:16 Lebanon is not sufficient for altar fires, nor its animals enough for burnt offerings.

- The Lord's work is far beyond the reach of human capability - we MUST rely upon him
- What is your perspective when the task far outweighs your ability to accomplish it?

Here is a story about perspective

- God's Perspective
- Joshua & Caleb's Perspective
- The 10 Spies' Perspective
- The Community's Perspective

What Happened Between Numbers 13:1 and Numbers 14:42

Numbers 13:1-2 The LORD said to Moses, 2 "Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders."

- When the Lord says "which I am giving to you" IT IS A DONE DEAL

Numbers 14:42 Do not go up, because the LORD is not with you. You will be defeated by your enemies

Perspectives

Numbers 13:27-28 They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. 28 But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there.

- We all want the land of Milk & Honey - we just wished there were no giants there
- When the Lord calls us to do something He does not base it on OUR ability to perform -

in fact most of the time it is beyond our ability so that HE CAN BE GLORIFIED

- When the Lord wants to do something HE DOES NOT CONDUCT RISK ASSESSMENT - there is nothing He can't do - there is no risk that would thwart His plan
- God's work should always require God's power - so by default it is ALWAYS beyond our ability to do in our own strength or wisdom
- The critical thing is - Understanding what He wants to do - and do THAT - for this is when we know that HE IS WITH US

Perspectives

Numbers 13:30 Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."

Numbers 13:31-33 But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." 32 And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). 33 We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

- It is not about what we can do in OUR strength
- It is not about what WE see
- It is not about our personal self esteem - or our opinion of ourselves

Which Perspective Persuades Your Heart?

Numbers 14:1-4 That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. 2 All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! 3 Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?"

Numbers 14:6-9 Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes 7 and said to the entire Israelite assembly, "The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. 8 If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. 9 Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them."

God's Perspective

Numbers 14:11 The LORD said to Moses, "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them?"

- He wants us to believe in Him and have confidence in Him

Do you have a different spirit?

Numbers 14:24 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.

He esteems the one that is “lame” in spirit

Isaiah 66:1-2 This is what the LORD says: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be? 2 Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?” declares the LORD. “This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.

Contrite = lame

smitten, that is, (literally) maimed, or (figuratively) dejected:—contrite, lame.

- Mephibosheth - dispeller of shame
- Man at the gate beautiful - laid there everyday - he was about 40 yrs old

Greater reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ

What will it take to reduce us to this?

Psalms 73:25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

Sometimes hardships drive us to rely on him

2 Corinthians 1:8-9 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. 9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

Do we believe this?

John 15:5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

The they might BE WITH HIM - preceded the sending

Mark 3:14-15 He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.

They Had Been With Jesus - courage & boldness sprang from that

Acts 4:13-17 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. 14 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. 15 So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. 16 “What are we going to do with these men?” they asked. “Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. 17 But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name.”

