



## TRUSTING BOLDLY

### Encounter Prayer:

Dear God, great is your faithfulness. We give thanks for brand new mercy we receive each day like manna from heaven. Help us to trust in you. Help us to be bold like Joshua and Caleb when we face the giants in our lives. Help us to reflect your light and love in the world. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen!

### Encounter God:

Where have you seen God at work in your life this week?

### Encounter Neighbor:

What good have you done for someone else this week?

### Encounter Scripture: Numbers 13:25-30

*"At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the Israelites in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, 'We came to the land to which you sent us; it flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Yet the people who live in the land are strong, and the towns are fortified and very large; and besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the land of the Negeb; the Hittites, the*

*Jebusites, and the Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live by the sea, and along the Jordan.' But Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it.'"*

Like most couples, Gabrielle and I had a period of courtship that preceded our marriage. During the courtship period we learned to trust each other. I learned that I could depend on Gabrielle during both the highs and lows of my life. She learned the same about me. When we entered our marriage covenant, we professed our fidelity to and love for each other in the presence of God and those who were gathered. Our relationship status changed and along with it our expectations changed for each other. We were committed to love and support each other for the rest of our lives. Love and trust rooted in our mutual faith in God is the foundation for our relationship.

The children of Israel and God also experienced a courtship period. In the book of Exodus, Chapters 15-17, the people issued three complaints: the water was bitter or diseased, they lacked food, and they lacked water. Each time the people murmured or complained God responded by assisting them: sweet water, manna from heaven, and water from a rock. After the events of on Mount Sinai God's assistance becomes judgment: the revelation of the law and the establishment of the covenant. The courtship period was over, and God expected the people to trust him.

In the book of Numbers, the people continue their murmuring, again the people complain about the food, general complaints about being in the wilderness, complaints about Moses' leadership, and protest about entering the Promised Land. Each of these complaints is met with God's Divine judgment. The murmuring of the people demonstrated their lack of trust in God. God had proven God's faithfulness to his children yet, God's children demonstrated little faith in return.

Moses sent twelve spies, one from each of the twelve tribes in order to gain information about the land of Canaan. After forty days, the spies returned and reported that the land was good for planting crops, but the people were warriors in fortified cities. Some of the spies exaggerated the size of the people by saying they were like giants. Caleb speaks up and tries to encourage the people that the land can be taken. Caleb trusted God and was not fearful. However, the people murmured and complained against Moses and Aaron. As a result of the people's faithlessness, God does not allow anyone twenty years old or older to enter the Promised Land, except Caleb and Joshua the son of Nun.

Moses demonstrated great leadership. First, he was obedient to God's command to send spies into the land. Secondly, he intercedes on behalf of the people when God decides to strike them down with a pestilence. Likewise, Caleb and Joshua demonstrated great leadership, the kind of leadership that will serve the new generation well when they eventually enter the Promised Land. Joshua and Caleb demonstrate their faith in God while the rest of the spies give in to fear. While Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the entire assembly, Joshua and Caleb stood on God's word and spoke up. As a result, people threaten to stone them. These two men were under tremendous pressure to go along with the crowd but instead, they chose to walk with God.

Just as in marriage when we say, "I do" and enter the marriage covenant, saying yes to Jesus means we should be faithful and loving during the highs and lows. If all we do is complain rather than petition the Lord through prayer, then that shows a lack of gratitude and faith. Jesus, God Incarnate, should be the number one relationship in our lives. When we live the truth that Jesus is Lord of our lives it means radical obedience and dependence. God expects us to remember all the times God has answered prayers, provided for us during the wilderness seasons of our lives, and brought us into the Promised Land.

**Encounter Heads:**

What lessons in leadership do we learn from Moses and Aaron? Caleb and Joshua?

Define the word "covenant" in your own words.

**Encounter Heart**

Share a time when you demonstrated your trust in the Lord by speaking up while others encouraged you to accept a different position from your conviction or asked to remain quiet.

What are our giants? What are your personal giants (those things that keep us from moving into the promised land)?

Why do we sometimes find it so hard to place our trust in God?

**Encounter Hands:**

Did you cause harm in word or deed to someone this week? (self-examination). If so, confess your sin to God, then seek to reconcile with your brother or sister.

Share your prayer concerns and celebrations.

Ask a member of the group to pray for the concerns and give thanks for the celebrations.

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## Notes Sections

**Prayer Concerns:**

**Celebrations:**

### **Daily Reflection Questions**

Where have I seen God at work in my life today?

What is one thing that I am thankful for?

What is one thing that broke my heart today?

What is one good thing did I do for someone else today?