

The Rebellion

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[0 : 00] Father, thank you that you give us everything we need. Thank you that you are speaking God and you give us your word as we live for you as we trust you as we are here in this world.

You speak to us the words that we need to hear words of life, words of power, words of love. So would we hear you speak to us today no matter how young we are, how old we are in Jesus name. Amen.

Great. Now, I don't know if you ever had to wait for something like a really long time, but it was really worth it. I don't know, maybe a certain holiday that you've been planning for ages and finally you can go and you're there and it's just wonderful.

Right. It's so worth it. Or I don't know, maybe there's a Disneyland. They have a new ride and it's maybe building it for ages, but it opens and it's just this fantastic roller coaster. Right. Maybe as kids, you've had that experience. I don't know how you found frozen land when it opens. Maybe your wedding. Right.

That is something that you've planned for ages. And what a wonderful day. How do you feel then? Right. It's really you feel so happy, so thankful that you've arrived at this point that God has brought you here.

[1 : 08] Well, that's kind of what we should be feeling for today's passage, because, you know, the book of Numbers, it's about God's people traveling through the wilderness.

If you don't know the background, the people of Israel, well, they were slaves in Egypt. Right. They they come there. They've been there for hundreds of years. Life was tough, but God rescued them. That's what he promised. Right. Hundreds of years before he promised to a man named Abraham, your descendants, you're going to be slaves. But I'm going to bring them out. I'm going to bring them to the promised land, to this wonderful land of milk and honey where everything's going to be great.

And he promised that. And so they were in slavery and it was tough. But they waited and waited. And God came and he he rescued them. Right. You've maybe you've seen the Prince of Egypt, that movie. Great movie. Great movie. All these plagues. And then they went through the Red Sea. Right.

With walls of water on each side. Two million people walking through the Red Sea. And then, yeah, so wonderful. They had to travel through the desert, of course. They you know, the Red Sea wasn't it yet, which was a tough journey. A lot of complaining.

[2 : 16] But today in the passage, they're coming to the promised land. Finally, after 650 years of waiting for God's promise. And maybe, you know, the story, the leader, Moses, sent some spies to go into the land and just, hey, show.

Tell us how good the land is. So that's hopefully they'll really excited. Right. When they go in. And it is. So we're not going to read all of chapter 13 because it's a lot of difficult names.

But the spies, well, what verse 23, 13, verse 23. And they came to the valley of Ashkel and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster of grapes.

And they carried it on a pole between two of them. Right. I don't know if any of you have ever been on holiday in Israel. It's quite difficult. There's often a war there. But when you can go there, you may see this logo.

This is the Ministry of Tourism in Israel. And that picture, that's from this passage. Right. These two guys having to carry one cluster of grapes because this land was so abundant and so prosperous that, you know, here's one cluster of grapes.

[3 : 24] They had to carry it with two people. How would they feel? Right. They made it to the edge of the land. But, you know, they were slaves and now they are here.

Right. God brought them out. God brought them through, traveling through the desert with all their stuff, this tough journey. And now, well, look at this land. Look at these grapes. Look at the land of milk and honey.

How generous is God? So they just need to go in and live happily ever after. Well, Mark Light and Koppany are going to come and do the reading for us. It's a bit of a long reading.

We won't read everything, but it's still six, seven minutes or something. But, yeah, looking forward to it. Thank you. Good morning, church.

Today's scripture reading is taken from the book of Numbers, chapter 13, verse 25, to chapter 14, verse 35. Please follow along your Bible. And if you still do not have one, there should be some in front of the stage and near the entrance door.

[4 : 35] And our passage is on page 113. Hear then God's word to us today.

At the end of 40 days, they returned from spying out the land. And they came to Moses and Aaron and all to all the congregation of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh.

They brought back the 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.

However, the people who dwell in the land are stronger, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell 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.

[5 : 39] Then the man who had gone up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are. So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, The land through which we have gone to spy it out is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in the air of great height.

And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak who come from the Nephilim. And we seem to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seem to them. And all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night.

And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, Would that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would that we had died in this wilderness? Why is the Lord bringing us into this land to fall by the sword?

Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Will it not be better for us to go back to Egypt? And they said to one another, Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the people of Israel.

And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, The land which we passed through to spy it out is an exceedingly good land.

[6 : 55] If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord, and do not fear the people of the land, for they are bred for us.

Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them. And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. But the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel.

And the Lord said to Moses, How long will these people despise me, and how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they. But Moses said to the Lord, Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for you brought up the people in your might from among them, and they will tell the inhabitants of this land, They have heard that you, O Lord, are in the midst of this people.

For you, O Lord, are seen face to face, and your cloud stands over them, and you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. Now if you kill these people as one man, then the nations who have heard your fame will say, It is because the Lord was not able to bring these people into the land that He swore to give to them, that He was killed them in the wilderness.

[8 : 10] And now, please let the power of the Lord be great as you promised, saying, The Lord is slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth

generation.

Please pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people from Egypt until now.

And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to your word, but truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times, and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land I swore to give to their fathers.

And none of those who despised me shall see it, but my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully, I will bring into the land which he went.

And his descendants shall possess it. Now since the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valleys, turn to Moro and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea. And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, How long shall this wicked congregation grumble against me?

[9 : 27] I have heard the grumbings of the people of Israel, which they grumble against me. Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord, What you have said in my hearing I will do to you. Your dead body shall fall in this wilderness, and of all your numbers listed in the census, from twenty years old and upwards, who have grumbled against me, not one shall come into the land where I swore I would make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joseph the son of Nun.

But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have rejected. But as for you, your dead body shall fall in this wilderness, and your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness.

According to the number of days in which you have spied out the land, forty days, a year for each day, you shall bear your iniquity for forty years, and you shall know my displeasure.

I, the Lord, have spoken. Surely this will I do to all the wicked congregation who have gathered together against me. In this wilderness they shall come to a full end, and there they shall die. And the man who Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing up a bad report about the land, the man who brought up a bad report of the land, died by plague before the Lord.

Of those men who went to spy out the land, only Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, remained alive. Let us believe and respond to God's true and living word.

[10 : 59] Cool. Thanks so much, guys. Well read. Such a long reading. But, I mean, maybe you knew the story already.

But, yes, it can be like a movie you've seen before. But, man, this is such a shock, right? It's such a shock that this is how these people respond. This event is so famous in the Bible.

Psalms, I mean, Psalm 95, quoted in Hebrews 3, right? Today, therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, right?

The rebellion. Like everyone knows, the rebellion. That is what we are looking at today, at what these people did, right? They were so close. They came out of Egypt one and a half years ago. They're on the border of the promised land right there, and now they walked away. They're leaving God, right? They're saying, God, we don't want you. We're going back to where we came from.

[11 : 58] So that's it, the rebellion. I mean, can you imagine? Like a famous, you know, Christians, right, who are at the end of their life. They're about to die.

Sometimes they say these wonderful things, right? I'm a great sinner, but Jesus is a great savior. John Newton, or, you know, to live is Christ, to die is gain. Imagine someone saying, I wish I'd never become a Christian.

What a waste. Let me give it all up now. That would be a terrible shock, but that is what these people are doing. Now, this story, in a way, is not hard to understand, right?

It's very clear what the people do, and it's also, in a way, not hard to apply, right? The Bible says, don't be like them. Don't do what they did.

Watch out. But I think God wants us to feel it, right? He could say it in a very short passage, but he wants us to feel what these people did and to feel how God responds.

[12 : 55] And so that's what I want to do. So let's look at those two things, and then let's apply it to our lives. How did you speak to us? Well, one is when we're Christians, but also maybe you are here, and you wouldn't call yourself a Christian.

What does this have to say to us? Yeah, it's here in the Bible for a reason. It's a reason why it often comes up in the Bible, as in, hey, look at these people. Don't be like them.

Now, we call it a rebellion because that's what they're doing, right? I mean, rebelling is part of what we said in the catechism, rebelling against God. That's what sin is. Of course, they turn around and walk away.

But as you've heard, it's not just the... Yes, there's an outward action, but actually what goes on underneath is what is in their...

There's something in their hearts, isn't it? And that's the issue, something that actually has been there for a long time, because what God says, if you've heard in reading in verse 11, what does he say is wrong with these people?

[13:54] And the Lord said to Moses, how long will these people despise me? How long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? How long will they not believe?

And that word only appears twice in numbers, but it's both in very significant places. This is unbelief. Yes, they rebel, and you might think that's such a big thing. But it starts with unbelief. It starts with them not believing, right? And that's what actually is much more closer to home. Unbelief in our hearts. And so in a way, it's number two.

Last week, of course, was the start, but this is the climax. So let's have a look. And yeah, let's start with this bad report, because that's where we can see this, right?

So the spies come back and they say, yeah, this land is amazing, right? Look at the fruit. Look at the milk and honey. But, yeah, verse 28, however, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large, right?

[14:56] This is a dangerous place. Later, you know, of course, Caleb, he has faith. He says, yeah, well, come on, let's go in. But no, no, don't go in. These people, they're so strong.

They're tall. They're like giants. We will die. Now, one thing you notice when you've heard the reading, they don't mention God at all, right?

They just say, oh, look at these people. They're so strong. They're so large. Nothing about God. We just, what is sin? Living without reference to God, right? That's so different from, well, there are two of the spies that they're different, Caleb and Joshua.

Well, you've especially hear it later when people rebel and they tear their clothes. 14 verse 8. If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us.

Later in verse 9. Do not fear the people of the land for their bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them. What?

[15:59] They have faith. They say that the Lord is with us. The Lord delights in us. Fine. No problem. But no, the other spies, they, yeah.

You know, these people are just too big. They're just ignoring God. And the thing is, they should know so much better, right? And sometimes maybe you try to share the gospel, and it feels like you're trying to persuade people that there's this invisible God that no one's ever seen, but he's there, and you need to believe in him, right?

That can feel like a hard sell. But these people are different, right? God just, why are they here and no longer in Egypt? Well, because God just rescued them, right?

They saw the 10 plagues. They saw God split the Red Sea, and they walked through the Red Sea on dry land. What happened there, right? Surely God is real.

And after they went through, the Egyptian army came, and God, you know, smashed up back the water and drowned them all. Surely they know God is powerful.

[17:03] This was the greatest superpower to date in the world, and God just smashed them, right? These people in Canaan should be no problem at all. But no, and incredibly, the people believed the spies, right?

They, well, it's terrible, right? 14 verse 1, Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night, and all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron.

The whole congregation said to them, Would that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would that we had died in this wilderness? Why is the Lord bringing us into this land to fall by the sword?

I mean, they don't even say that God doesn't exist, or that he's powerless. They're saying God is evil, right? Why is he trying to kill us? I mean, surely, come on, God has, you've seen him.

You've seen how he protected you, how he looked after you, how he provided for you, how he's living with you, right? How would you say this, right? This is not doubt or skepticism.

[18:06] This is rebellion. Right? This incredible unbelief. And again, that's not a sudden change, right? If you were here last week, already for a few chapters, they've been complaining, and why is God doing this to us?

But of course, they act on it. Verse 3, Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt? And they said to one another, Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt.

They turn around, they leave the God who rescued them, and they prefer Egypt. They prefer slavery. I hope you feel this is offensive, right?

You know, this is not, again, it's not a lack of evidence. God says, they're despising me. That's what it is, right? I mean, in a way, that's really what sin is.

I mean, think back to the Garden of Eden. I mean, that was, this is a very big event, right? But Garden of Eden, that's like the big one in the Bible. Isn't that the same thing? You know, they got this bad report, Adam and Eve, in a way, they got a bad report from Satan, right?

[19:14] Satan said, oh, don't eat, you can eat from the tree, don't worry. God doesn't really love you. God won't actually do anything. you know, he's powerless. And they did it. Why would they believe the Satan?

Satan? Why would they believe the serpent? A few days earlier, they didn't exist yet. Why did, how did they come to exist in this garden? Surely there is a God of love, and power, and generosity. And, yeah, right? Or think of, I know, what would be a modern example? Think of a, think of an orphan, living in this dirty orphanage, no food, or terrible food, abuse, you know, it's, life is terrible. And then this loving family, adopts him, gives him everything he wants, right? A home, a family, love, abundant food, and toys, and, an education, a chance at a new life.

And then this child says, why do you hate me so much? I was better off in this orphanage, and goes back. Now, that's, that's not logical, rational action. That's, that's despising.

[20:25] I hope we feel what a, you know, God says some strong words here, but I hope you feel that they, you know, these people, this is not right, right? This is not how people should live.

Well, how do you think, and so how do you think God responds? How do you think he should respond? I think we feel what would be right, right? To be, how should God respond?

Well, the rebellion, and then comes the judgment, right? This is, this is judgment. Say that you can feel the tension in the story, right? Because, you know, the people are turning around, and Moses and Aaron fall on the, on their faces, and Caleb and Joshua tear their clothes, and the people try to stone them.

But then, end of verse 10, but the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel, right? God shows up, and yeah, like he said, how long will these people despise me? How long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I've done among them, right? Everything I've done for them, and now they do this. And so he, he threatens to destroy the whole nation.

[21:28] And Moses, of course, just like last week, Moses intercedes, right? He, he starts praying, please, Lord, spare them, I mean, I, I love this prayer. Maybe, you know, I can't spend that much time on it.

It's a great prayer. What I love is that he doesn't excuse the people, right? He doesn't say, hey, you know, they've been under a lot of stress at work, right? Recently. And that's why they're like this. You know, they're, they're generally pretty good.

You know, this is not that bad. Hey, uh, no, there's no excuse, but you know, he appeals to God's glory. God, if you wipe them out, then you are not fulfilling your promise, right?

It looks like you haven't fulfilled your promise. So don't do it. Uh, Lord, uh, scripture, you know, you said you are merciful and just, so please show your mercy, right? He, he appeals to God's glory. He appeals to scripture, wonderful ways to pray, but I mean, we don't have much time for it. Uh, it's a great lessons on prayer, but I think it's here mainly to show how close, you know, how close they got to being wiped out, right?

[22:29] What a terrible event this was, but wonderfully. Well, yeah, the prayer works, right? Verse 20. Uh, the Lord said, I have pardoned according to your words.

Yes, he forgives them, but that doesn't mean there's no judgment. Verse 21. But truly as I live and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these 10 times and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers, right? God says, I can't overlook this, right? God is the king of the universe and people treat him like this. You just can't do that without consequences.

They can't just despise him and say these things, right? And so none of the congregation, none of these people who despise me will come into the land. And he says, okay, I'm going to give you what you want.

You said, oh, it's better for us to die in the wilderness. Well, there you go. Let me, you will all die in the wilderness for 40 years. You're going to wander around until all of you have died.

[23 : 36] All the adults and the kids, the kids, they're so worried about that. Ah, they'll, they'll kill our kids. Well, the kids, they are going to come in. When they grow up, they will inherit the land that you have rejected.

I think, you know, you may wonder how does God forgive them if they still have to die? Well, I mean, they would have been wiped out, right? At least now they can have kids and raise them. And those children will inherit. There is a future for the nation, a future for their families, but sin has consequences, right? Sometimes, you know, we, we think of forgiveness means there's no consequences, but there is.

Imagine if you found out that I've been stealing money from the church. Now, my guess is, uh, I hope I will repent and that you will forgive me, but can I, can I stay as pastor?

Probably not. Right? Sin has consequences. I think we, we, we know that. And these sins, yeah, terrible consequences. And it's not an empty threat. You heard those 10 spies who gave the bad report.

[24 : 37] They die immediately. And the next day when they, they say, Oh, we're so sorry. We'll go into the land. No, they can't. Uh, this is definite. And so this is a very severe judgment.

One of the darkest moments in the old Testament, right? Uh, sorry that it's not an encouraging passage. If you come here today and you were hoping a wonderful, nice Kumbaya.

No, that's not this message. God is, but I hope you feel that this is, it's right. God is not flying off the handle. He's not losing his temper. And Dave, these people, they've been despising him.

They've been complaining and grumbling ever since they came out of Egypt. Again, it's not like God deals with this, with every sin, right? It's not that again, that they were not just good people who had a bad day.

It's not that they really tried their best, but you know, they're, they're struggling. Maybe you're, you're here as a Christian and you, you hear this and you're, some of us are very sensitive about our sin. And these are not people who are, yeah, who are struggling.

[25 : 42] It's not that, you know, there's just all these rules in Exodus and Leviticus and they got an A minus, but God won't accept anything but an A plus, right? It's not like that.

No, they, yeah, they despise the Lord and there's consequences. So I, I think that the application I hope is, is obvious, right? We, we see this, we see what they did.

We see how God reacts. don't be like them. Don't be like them, right? That, that's what the Bible says today. If you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.

Don't be like this people or the positive. Well, basically keep trusting, keep holding onto Christ, keep saying with God, don't give up, don't walk away. And yet when you hear that, you think that's so extreme, right?

How could we ever be like them? What? Although we have to admit there are Christians who give up, right? Most of us will know people, maybe, maybe you're a bit older and you were at university with some Christians and they were, uh, uh, wonderful people in this Christian union.

[26 : 48] And now they've still believing. What happened? Yeah. This does happen, right? I mean, Hebrews that quotes this, that, you know, that was written to people about to give up people.

They found it very tough to be a Christian because people were against them. And I thought, if I can just go back to my old life, then I wouldn't get persecuted. I wouldn't have all these people against me.

And the writer says, don't do it. But like I said, the issue was their hearts, right? It's something that started much earlier. I was reminded of this, this verse in James, James talks about sin.

And he says about sinful desires, then desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin and sin. When it is fully grown, brings forth death. And it's kind of how sinful desires, it takes shapes in our hearts and it's, you know, it grows and it grows.

But, you know, conception to birth, to fully grown. Well, we know with humans, that's a long process, right? That's 18 months, 18 years and nine months, right?

[27 : 52] That's, that's a long thing. And that's the idea. Sinful desires, they, they take a long time, but there is an end point. There is death. If you don't deal with it, right?

And so that's the, that's the thing. Yeah. And so, yeah, no one here, I hope is saying, yeah, tomorrow I'm going to stop being a Christian. If you call yourself a Christian, but do we have some of these things in our hearts that will one day lead us away?

Right? And the good question, do you ever long to go back to Egypt? But that's what you hear here, right? These people, they, well, here in this chapter, they're saying, let's go back to Egypt.

But it, last week, if you were here, that's what they were saying in a way as well, right? They were saying, oh, it was so much better in Egypt. In Egypt, we had it so good. And now they're saying, let's go back to Egypt.

So that's a good question, right? Do we, what do we, do we ever long to go back? I think I love this verse because it's just so ridiculous, right?

[28 : 57] We saw that last week and the people of Israel also wept again. I said, oh, that we had meat to eat. We remember the fish we ate in Egypt. That costs nothing. The cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic.

Well, I thought, so this is a cucumber, right? It's so juicy and tasty. I'm not going to join the lunch. I'm just going to eat this.

No, seriously, right? I mean, cucumbers are nice. Would you give up the promised land for a cucumber? Would you turn back? Okay, I'm going to go back to slavery in Egypt, but at least I'll have my cucumber, right?

I mean, that's ridiculous, but basically that's, so it's something really, actually, if you think about, it's nice, but actually it's a very small thing, but isn't that what we, some, what we do?

There were things in our old life that we idolize, that we, that we want. Let me, let me ask two questions. If you were, whether maybe, maybe you're, yeah, for, first for us as Christians, and then maybe for those of us who are, not, not yet Christians who wouldn't call ourselves, you know, are there times maybe that you resent being a Christian?

[30 : 11] Here's a good question. Are there times that you resent being a Christian? That you think, I wish I wasn't a Christian. Maybe it's Sundays, right? You're on a couple of teams and every Sunday morning you come here and every morning you have to do stuff and you, your heart isn't really in it and you, you feel this is this obligation and you think, oh man, if I wasn't a Christian, I could just stay in bed.

I mean, it's, it's nice to stay in bed, but can you imagine that that will slowly eat away until the day that you decide, yeah, I've, I've had it. I mean, I am going to stay in bed.

I'm, I've had it with Christianity. I mean, you don't want that to happen. Or I don't know, maybe if you're younger, you're in school and you have friends there who are, well, they, they wouldn't call you, they, they, they don't call themselves Christians and they get to do things that you can't because you're a Christian.

And do you sometimes feel jealous that I wish I could do those things? That's a dangerous feeling, right? Because that's, you know, that's, that's what I mean with like a cucumber, right?

Or maybe you're older. I don't know. Maybe you're in a marriage and the marriage is kind of boring and the love is gone. And, you know, you wish you could be with someone else.

[31 : 24] Except of course, Christians don't do that, right? Christians don't do that. And yet that eats away, right? It eats away until the point where maybe you decide to leave.

I mean, I hope you can see the unbelief there, right? This is living without reference to God. Then you're not thinking, okay, God can help me with this. You're thinking, you're basically thinking, God won't help me with this marriage.

God can't change his marriage. God can't do anything. God just wants me to suffer, right? That's the unbelief behind it. But it leads one day to, well, some people, yeah, they have an affair or they leave.

And again, you wouldn't choose that, right? Again, would you give up eternity with Jesus? Well, for your mornings in bed, for an affair, for whatever.

That's, that's the problem, right? I hope you can see that, right? That this is going on in our hearts. And I guess if you wouldn't call yourself a Christian, you, you'd, well, your situation is different.

[32 : 25] You're still in Egypt, right? You're in, in terms of the picture here, right? You have Egypt and then the journey and the promised lands. you're still in Egypt. Is there something that keeps you in Egypt?

Now, maybe you don't want to become a Christian because, and yet, because it's, it's all new to you and you're still thinking, you know, is this God real? Is this gospel true? Hey, I'm not talking about that, but maybe you understand it.

But here's a question. Is there something you don't want to give up? Is there something in your life that, okay, becoming a Christian means giving this up and I don't want to give that up.

Maybe that's a, that's what I'd call a cucumber, right? Uh, there's something in my life that, Hey, I, I want to hold onto this, but would you do that? Right? Would you really, you know, if I, I mean, certainly this was the case for me before I was a Christian.

I looked into it and Christianity is probably true, but I didn't want to become a Christian because I didn't want to stop lying. I didn't want to stop drinking. I just wanted to be in control of my own life.

[33 : 26] And so until God showed me where this was all heading, I think about eternity. Think about a perfect world where you can be with Jesus forever. What we've sung about.

Would you really say no? Thanks. I don't want that. I'd rather just go to hell with this. What I can have now. I don't think any of us would, would do that in our right minds.

And yet so many of us do this, right? And this is a real danger. This is something, you know, we want to watch out for. Now, what are ways we can do that?

Uh, again, Kevin gave us a few ideas last week. Uh, want to give, well, one of them I want to double click on. Well, Kevin mentioned last week community. Actually, that is what's Hebrew says, right? When Hebrews warns people, uh, here, take care of brothers, lest there be an, any of you and on evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God, but exhort one another every day, as long as it is called today, that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

[34 : 28] Now, you can't see the bold letters for some reason, but, uh, take care of brothers, uh, any of you, one another, none of you. And we, we always think, okay, I need to watch my heart.

Hebrew says, no, you as a group, watch each other's hearts and look after each other. Make sure that none of you here, that no one here is walking away. Keep each other together, right?

It's a, it's a group thing, yeah? Because often I don't see my heart very well, but you can see what's going on in my heart because you see me going off the track. And so that's why, you know, uh, do something, uh, yeah, look after each other.

Maybe someone in your community group, maybe someone in the youth group, and you see them and you see the decisions. They're making, maybe the person they're dating, maybe their career decisions, the way they spend money.

And you kind of wonder what is in their hearts. Why did I, did this seems to be a wrong path? This is not something that a Christian should do. This is not something that you'd expect of a Christian.

[35 : 36] I guess you want to warn them, right? Like Caleb and Joshua here, don't do this, right? Don't rebel. Now, of course, there's many things we don't know. We need to be humble, gentle, you know, ask questions.

Maybe there's things we don't know, things that are going on. You want to be like that. But at the same time, if it's a clear path to danger, you don't want to ignore that, right? Love would mean talking to them.

Love would mean warning them, saying, Hey, uh, are you sure? Right? Don't do this. Love is willing to do tough things. Love is putting someone else's goods before my own comfort.

Even though, even if they don't like it, I've struggled with that. I've tried to tell people and they don't like being told. What can you do? I think the loving thing is still to say it.

So take care of each other. But that's very remedial, right? That's when there's already a problem. I think the bigger thing, uh, well, the better thing is look forward.

[36 : 37] Right? These people were looking back. All right. They thought, Oh, the cucumbers we had in Egypt. That's why their hearts were set on Egypt because they, they thought of the cucumbers in Egypt.

Why didn't they just look forward? Why didn't they just think, Oh, the promised land. We're going to have such massive cucumbers there. Right? That'd be so one. Right? But isn't that how we think? Right? What makes you spend days packing your suitcase and getting on a plane and being squashed for hours on a plane? No one enjoys that. Why do we do it? Because we look forward to the destination, right?

We want to go on that holiday to that amazing place. And that's why we enjoy the travel. Isn't that the same thing for the Christian life? How can we live as a Christian? Well, we need to look forward to the destination.

Right? We, you know, are you looking forward to an eternity with Jesus? Right? This new creation of eternal love and joy and peace that we, you know, every brokenness heals, every wrong we made right.

[37 : 36] That is where we're going to be. You know, if you look forward to that, yeah, you want to go. Right? Just like these people, if they were looking forward to it, they would have raced in, into the promised land because they wanted it.

Yeah? Are we looking forward? It's going to be so wonderful. We're going to think more about it later in the series. It's how the book series is going to end. But yeah, are we looking forward? Yeah?

After all, God is so generous and wonderful. Again, the way I started the series, I started this sermon. Yeah, I set it up a little bit, but later the people were there, their children, they came to the edge and they knew about God's love and generosity.

And they went in. Right? We know God is so generous and wonderful. We know how much he loves us. I mean, he gave up his son to bring us there. Surely we can trust him.

Right? And the work is already done. They were still afraid of those giants. And they should have looked to God. Okay. What God had done. Shouldn't we look at, I mean, who are the real giants?

[38 : 36] Right? It's sin, Satan, death. And Jesus defeated all of those already. Right? He died on the cross. He defeated sin. He defeated Satan. He defeated death. Of course, they're still around, but basically the Bible says they are defeated, right?

They can't stop you getting there. They can't stop God's plan. They're defeated. And so it's going to happen. When you get to heaven, you can just walk in. There's nothing more you need to do. And doesn't that help us?

Doesn't it give us faith? Doesn't it give us hope? And that's what we need. Some of us are very close to the edge. Some of us are still a long way away, 80 years.

But, you know, Jesus, he didn't, doesn't just give us everything for the journey. He gives us everything. He already gave everything for the destination. We can go in. So let's keep going. Let's forget about our cucumbers. Right? In our old life. Let's look forward. We know it will be wonderful. There's nothing more we need to do. Let's keep going.

[39 : 39] Let's keep trusting. Why don't we pray? Our father, we, we thank you for your love and your generosity for everything.

We know there's a wonderful future ahead. And yet our hearts can be so deceitful. Please, we help each other keep going. Would each of us hold our original confidence firm to the end?

Would we do that with you and with each other? As together we journey. Lord, we, yeah, we pray that if there's anyone here who really is going in the wrong direction, you would use today to turn them around.

But for each of us, Lord, give us faith. Drive out the unbelief in our hearts. Give us a great view of Jesus so that we will, yeah, we will want to be with him.

And we want to travel with him. That we will be with you forever. In Jesus name. Amen.