

# The Christian Arsenal

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## KING OF THE MOUNTAIN

**Joshua 14:6-15**

Dr. Adrian Rogers

When I was a boy, there was a game I used to love to play called “king of the mountain.” If we could find any kind of little hill where somebody had left a pile of dirt or anything that looked like a hill, we could spend all afternoon playing king of the mountain. One boy gets on the top and the others try to pull him down. When you’re on the top you have the advantage, you can push the others down and when two or three of them get hold of you, they can drag you off the mountain. That’s a good game and if you’ve never played king of the mountain, it’s a great game.

I want to talk to you tonight about how you can be king of the mountain, even those of you who think you’re over the hill. Actually, the story tonight is about an 85 year old giant killer...a man who really should be over the hill, but he said concerning a very strategic mountain, “I want that mountain...” and he took it! He took it by faith and it’s a great lesson for us!

Joshua 14:6-15...

Well, I want to talk to you tonight about “higher ground”...just how to keep on growing and to rise up higher if you’re not satisfied with where you are right now. What the Bible Study is really about tonight is for you to claim your possession...for you to possess your possessions...for you to put your faith on the promises of God and have the victory that God wants you to have.

Many of us fail to learn how to claim the promises of God. These promises of God, and by the way, the Bible is crammed full of promises...these promises are not mottoes to be hung on the wall, they’re checks to be carried to the bank. But many of us just simply look at these promises and we say, “Oh, what great and precious promises they are...” but we never really claim them.

Now, I want to ask you a question. What does what happened to Caleb so long ago, an 85 year old man, have to do with you tonight? Well, very much...This is just not just interesting history. It is a great devotional lesson. The Bible clearly says in 1 Corinthians 10:11... “All these things happened unto them for examples to us...” Now, that’s very important. That’s a key verse. And he’s talking about the Israelites possessing the Promised Land. And he says “it all happened to them as examples to us and they’re written for our admonition upon whom the end of the world is come.”

Now, Caleb is talking about the Promised Land...the land of victory, the land of Canaan. God gave it to Abraham, but the Jews had to take it, they had to dispossess the Canaanites and they had to possess the land. Now, it was a promise that God had given them, yet they still had to cross over Jordan and take that land.

In Bible symbolism, in typology, very clearly the land of Canaan speaks of the believer’s rest, the believer’s victory, it speaks of the Spirit filled life. Let me just tell you about five ways that it speaks of the life that you ought to live today...Now remember it happened to them. It literally happened. It happened to them as an example to you.

In the first place, when they entered into the land, they had liberty from oppression. They had come out of Egypt. They had been slaves in Egypt. Now, they’re coming into a land where they are to be free. You and I have been slaves to Satan and God wants us to be free. The Bible says, “Sin shall have no more dominion over you...”

# The Christian Arsenal

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Number two, they had been wandering around in the wilderness. When they entered into Canaan, they had rest from wandering. Again, it applies to me and to you. If you feel that spiritually you've been going around in circles, you need to learn the lesson tonight that we're going to learn from this man who said "I want that mountain...it belongs to me..."

Number three, they had possessions rather than mere promises. Now, they had the promises, but they turned the promises into possessions when they got into the land. You know what's wrong with many of us? We come and we sit in a church and we listen to myself or some other preacher and we may even take notes...we get the promises, we learn the lessons, but we never put the foot of faith upon the promises to claim them. When these people went into Canaan, it was no longer a promise...it was reality... it was possession.

Next, they had variety, rather than monotony. You know, when they were in the wilderness headed toward Canaan, do you know what they had to eat? Manna...for forty years, they'd eaten manna. No little boy ever got up and said, "Mama, what's for breakfast?" He never asked Mama, "What's for supper?" He never asked Mama, "What's for dinner?" It was manna in the morning, manna in the evening, manna at suppertime. It was manna, manna, manna!! After awhile, they said, "Our souls loathe this white bread," but when they went into Canaan, it was a land of figs and grapes and corn and oil and wine and pomegranates and a land that flowed with milk and honey...it was a land of hills and valleys, and so forth. Very frankly, I meet a lot of bored Christians because they've never really entered into Canaan. They never turn the promises into reality. They never begin to feast on the corn and the wine of Canaan.

Next, it represented accomplishment rather than waste. I mean, for forty years, these people have been in the wilderness and they have accomplished nothing. They're like a lot of Christians in this building today, you're just drawing your breath, drawing your salary...you're no more spiritually strong today than you were forty years ago if you have lived that long. You're just existing...there's no real change.

Well, if you want to turn promises into possessions...if you want to turn monotony into variety and vitality...if you want to turn meaninglessness into victory and achievement...if you're tired of wandering around in a spiritual desert, then this story is for you...

Now, we're going to look at this man, Caleb. He's a very interesting man. He's one of the great heroes of the Old Testament. Caleb said, "I want that mountain. It was promised to me." It was a very beautiful mountain...very luscious grapes would grow there, but this land was the hardest of all to possess...that particular spot, because it was filled with giants and not a one of them jolly!

So, here's Caleb now, 85 years old. Forty-five years ago, Moses had told him he could have that land and Caleb said, "Remember that?" They'd been wandering in the desert forty years, and now he says, "I want that land, it belongs to me."

Now there are about three or four things I want us to see tonight, and these things if God will help me to lay them upon your heart will help you as they've helped me to turn the promises of God into possessions...to lay claim on our promises.

The very first thing I want you to notice about this man, Caleb, is

## 1) His Character

This is very, very important. You'll never claim the promises unless you have the kind of character that Caleb had. Look if you will...if you want to find out something about the character of the eighty-five year old giant killer...this man who was king of the mountain. I want you to look

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at verse 8. “Nevertheless, my brethren went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God.”

Verse 9...Joshua speaks back to him...the last part of verse 9... “because thou has wholly followed the Lord thy God.”

Caleb said, “I did it...” and Joshua said, “That’s right, you wholly, completely, totally followed the Lord. Now look at verse 14... “Hebron, therefore, became the inheritance of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizite, until this day because he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.”

Now, what does that mean? It means he was not a half-hearted person. The reason he wasn’t fainthearted was because he wasn’t half-hearted. The prime characteristic of this man is that he was all out for God. Let me ask you a personal question... “Have you wholly followed the Lord? I’m not asking do you believe in Him...I’m not asking do you love Him...I’m not asking do you attend church...I’m asking are you totally, completely sold out? Are you?” I have to ask myself that question. “Am I completely, totally, one hundred percent sold out to God?”

There was a man who lived in another generation whose name was Dwight L. Moody. If you know anything about the Christian church in America...you know the name, Dwight L. Moody. Dwight L. Moody was a shoe clerk who got saved and he became an international evangelist. He greatly moved America and Europe for Christ. As a matter of fact, if you go to Chicago today, you find the Moody Bible Institute. It was founded because of the ministry of Dwight L. Moody. If you take one of the finest Christian publications today, Moody Monthly Magazine, it’s because of Dwight L. Moody. Dwight L. Moody had an incredible impact upon two continents for Jesus Christ. He’d never been to seminary. He was just a shoe clerk, saved when he was nineteen years old. He’d never really made much of an impact for God until one time he was in England and he heard a man speaking in an open field. That man’s name was a quiet spoken man by the name of Henry Varley. Henry Varley said something that would shake Dwight L. Moody to his very foundations. It made an incredible impact on him. Here’s what he said and I want you to listen to it... “The world has yet to see what God can do in and through and with and for a man wholly committed to Him.” Would you like to hear it again. Dwight L. Moody heard Henry Varley say, “The world has yet to see what God can do in and through and with and for a man wholly committed to Him.”

You know what Moody said at that moment? At that moment, this is what Moody said, “At that moment, I resolved to be that man, and I made a total commitment to Jesus Christ.” And from that time on, he was radically and dramatically changed. That was the turning point in Moody’s life and his biographer said that he took two continents and shook them for Jesus Christ...just an ordinary man! Dwight L. Moody...but the secret of Moody’s life was total commitment. The secret of Caleb’s life was total commitment. “I wholly followed the Lord my God.”

Stephen Oldford tells about some men who were wanting to have a revival crusade, and they were discussing...they were clergymen, preachers...and they were discussing who they would get to be the evangelist. And there were several who wanted Dwight L. Moody. They said, “We want Moody...let’s get Moody...let’s get Moody.” There was another man there who wasn’t so sold on Moody and he was a little perturbed with his brothers. And he said, “Moody, Moody, Moody...that’s all you fellows talk about is Dwight L. Moody...does Moody have a monopoly on the Holy Ghost? And one of them said, “No, but the Holy Ghost as a monopoly on Dwight L. Moody.”

That’s the question. None of us has a monopoly on the Holy Spirit, He’s available to all of us...the question is, “Does He have a monopoly on us?” The question is, “Are we like Caleb...are we 100% sold out to God?” I have to ask myself that question. There’s no reason I

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should not be. There's no reason you should not be. There's no reason I cannot be. We ought to be. He gave Himself for us. We're not our own, we are bought with a price. Caleb totally followed the Lord. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God." Wholly, totally, unto God!!

Now, first of all you see his character... What was his character? Sold out! Now, I want you to see how his character led to his

## 2) His Confidence

Character always leads to confidence. And here was a man, 85 years old, but he's marked with an incredible confidence. Now, I want you to see his confidence. Five times he uses an expression... "The Lord spoke..." Verse 6 for example... "Thou knowest the things that the Lord said..." Look in Verse 10... "Now behold the Lord has kept me alive, as He said..." Now look in verse 12... "Now therefore, give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spoke in that day..." Here's a man who has confidence in what God said. He said, "Now, God said this...God said this...God said this..."

Well now, I suppose all of us would say tonight that the Bible is the Word of God. I don't think that there's anybody sitting here in this prayer meeting would doesn't believe that the Bible is the Word of God. But yet, it doesn't turn to faith in our hearts. Why not? Why don't some people have the confidence that other people have? Does God have favorites? I mean, does God just kind of pick out one person and say, "you can have faith," and say to another person, "no, faith's not for you..." Listen, character is the soil in which the seed of the word of God grows and produces faith.

Now, if you have difficulty believing God, it's because you have a rotten character. I mean, you're not committed to God. Unbelief doesn't come out of the head...it comes out of the heart. The Bible says, "Beware, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief." You don't have intellectual problems if you have difficulty believing God...you have moral problems. When you are totally, completely sold out to God, you'll find faith. Faith will become automatic in your life. A pure heart responds to the word of God because it's right. Like my eye responds to light when my eye is right and like my ear responds to sound when my ear is right...your heart responds to the word of God when your heart is right.

Do you remember the parable of the sower when the seed was sown in different kinds of soil. One kind of soil brought forth fruit. Why? Because it was warm and moist and fertile and the seed could get in and the seed could get down. See, the problem with us is that the reason we don't believe is because we're not totally committed to the Lord. You will never live victoriously until you build your faith on the word of God and you will never have the faith that you ought to have until you've made up your mind to totally, wholly, completely follow the Lord. When Caleb drew out his sword and started up that mountain and said, "I want that mountain, it belongs to me" he had already soaked his soul in the word of God and he was standing on the promises before he was sitting on the premises. I mean, he had the title deed in his pocket...he'd already said, "That's mine. God gave it to me," and he believed God, he said, "That's what God has said."

The promises of God are very wonderful and we need to believe the promises of God, but we need to understand that it's the right kind of a heart...Character leads to confidence.

Now, you see his character, and you see his confidence. His character led to his confidence and his confidence led to his courage.

## 3) His Courage

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See, why was this man undaunted? Why was this man so courageous? Well, he had courage. Let me show you what he had to overcome. If you think what this guy did was easy...it wasn't!

First of all, he had to overcome grasshoppers. This was one of the hardest things he had to overcome....verses 7 and 8... "Forty years old was I when Moses, the servant of the Lord sent me to Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land and I brought him word again as it was mine heart, nevertheless mine brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the Lord my God..." Now, who were his brethren? These were the folks who said, "We can't take this land, because there are giants in the land and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers and so we were in their sight...we felt like grasshoppers and they agreed with us." These men had a grasshopper complex and they said, "We're never going to be able to overcome these giants...let's just get back to the comparative safety of the desert wasteland." Ten of the men said it could not be done and two of the men said it could be done, which leads me to say the majority is almost always wrong. The majority isn't in prayer meeting tonight are they? The majority is almost always wrong!!

If you go all out for God you must be serious about serving God. And this will sometimes bring opposition. I mean, sometimes when a wife gets serious about serving God, the husband tries to cool her down, and vice versa...even sometimes when a pastor or a committee says, "Well, let's do something great for God..." the congregation says, "Whoa, now wait a minute...hold it...let's don't be fanatic about this thing." There are always the grasshoppers amongst us. If you are going to do anything great for God, there are always those who will be like a drink of water to a drowning man. They just don't want you to do it...they don't want to do it...they're frightened...so here was this man...and he had to face the grasshoppers and he had to face the giants.

Verse 12... "...the Anakims were there and the cities were great and fenced and if so be, the Lord will be with me and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said..." These giants were there...but Caleb said, "That's alright." They were big...I mean...incredibly big. They were entrenched. The cities were walled there on the mountaintop and they had the advantage of height to play king of the mountain. They were filled with arrogance and they were filled with wickedness and Caleb said, "That's alright...I can overcome them."

Now, when I'm talking to you tonight about being a spirit-filled Christian...about living victoriously, some giants come to your mind: ego, pride, self-reliance, self-pity, discontent, unbelief, lust, grouchiness, and you say, "You know, I just don't believe I can overcome these things." Yes, you can. God wants you to live victoriously. Now, there will be others who say that it can't be done. These are the grasshoppers. There will be giants who say, "We won't let you do it." Caleb said, "No, I want that land...it belongs to me!"

What was the difference in Caleb and the others? The grasshoppers on the hand, and Caleb on the other hand? Well, the grasshoppers looked at those giants from their perspective...I mean, here are these giants up there, probably kin to Goliath...over nine feet tall, and they said, "Man, these are warlike people...they live on the mountaintop...we can't possibly overcome these folks." But Caleb wasn't thinking, "Look how much bigger they are than I am." Caleb was thinking, "Look how much smaller they are than God is." Caleb saw them from God's perspective.

Right now the NCAA tournament is going on and some of these fellows are really tall. Now, if you were to meet one of these tall basketball players you would really think, "Look how much taller he is than I am." But, if you get up in a plane and you look down and can pick him out, you know what? He won't look big at all. As a matter of fact, you wouldn't be able to pick

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him out, would you? I mean, you wouldn't be able to tell the difference between him and anybody else. He would just look like an ant. Now then...it's a matter of perspective.

You say, "But I've got these incredible problems..." Well, you probably do. And you say, "They're very big to me..." They probably are. But I want to ask you a question: "Are they big to God?" Think of the biggest problem you have. Think of the biggest problem that keeps you from living a victorious Christian life...old habits...genes and chromosomes...opposition...inbred sin...Think of it...Think of the biggest problem you have. Then double it. Then double it again. Then I want to ask you a question... "Is it big to God?"

No, it's not big to God!! See, Caleb had character and because he had character, he had confidence, and because he had confidence, he had courage. Do you know what he literally said when he gave his report? He said, "If the Lord delight in us then He will bring us into this land and give it us...a land that floweth with milk and honey..." Now, listen to this, "Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land for they are bread for us." BREAD...not BRED...they were not conceived for us. Bread like a loaf of bread. These giants...these people you say we can't overcome...they are our food. We'd say today that they are a piece of cake.

We will gobble them up. They are food for us. Now, what does bread do? Bread is the staff of life. What do you do with bread? You eat it!! And what happens when you eat it? You digest it and metabolize it and it turns to strength and it turns to energy and you GROW by eating bread. You work and walk and play by what you feed on.

Now, Caleb said, "These guys...these giants are bread for us." Those difficulties...those giants...why doesn't God just remove them? No! That's what God wants to feed you with. That's what you're going to grow on. Let's think about the NCAA tournament again. Now let's think about one of the teams of the final four. Let's put that team out on the floor and let's don't put another team out there for them to play against. Well, I guess they'll score every time they go up and down the court...but what good is that? There's no opposition...there's no victory because there's no opposition.

God is not going to remove those giants from you...God is going to help you overcome them and when you overcome them you're going to feed on them and when you feed on them you're going to grow and when you grow you're going to get strong in the Lord and you will know the victory and God will get the glory. If there'd been no giants on that mountain, we wouldn't be preaching this sermon right now...but Caleb said, "Those Anakim are bread and I will eat them..." Wheaties are not the breakfast of champions, Anakim are. "Pass the Anakim, Mom, I want to grow... I want to be strong."

Caleb had character, and because he had character he had confidence, and because he had confidence, he had courage, and because he had courage he had conquest...

## 4) His Conquest

God led him and God gave him the victory. I'm finished right now, I'm just going to wrap it up. Let me say that he moved into a land...by the way, I've been to Hebron. Sarah and Abraham are buried at Hebron. It's on the West Bank and sometimes you cannot go there because the situation is too volatile...but I've been there on several occasions. I've seen the vineyards there at Hebron.

See, what does all this represent? Well, Hebron is a place of fulness, and fruitfulness and grapes and figs and pomegranates. The Bible says that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance...that's the kind of fruit that you need in your mountaintop experience.

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Now, you say, "Well, Pastor Rogers, I'm just a boy...and you're talking about an 85 year old man..." or you say, "I'm an 85 year old man, I don't have the strength of a boy..." You see, the age is not the point. The fact that he was 85 years old is really only incidental to this story. You see, the God who promised the mountain promised the strength to conquer it and the God who preserved the possession for the man is the God who preserved the man for the possession.

Let me give you a verse and I'm finished. Isaiah 40:28-31...  
"Hast thou not known, and hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary and there's no searching of His understanding." (God never gets tired, God never passes out, God is never in a panic...God never comes to a place where He doesn't know what to do...)

Alright now listen...

"He, (God) gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary and the young men shall utterly fall but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and not faint."

If you're young or old, you can run out of strength...or if you're old or young, you don't have to because you wait on the Lord. That's what God says.

Character leads to confidence which leads to courage which leads to conquest.

Aren't you tired of living in the desert of mediocrity? Wouldn't you just like to say, "God, You promised me a victorious life. I want that mountain, and those giants are not going to keep me out of it...and a matter of fact...they're going to be food that I'll feed on and they'll make me stronger."

Bow your heads in prayer...

Would you ask yourself this question, as I'm going to ask myself, "Are you totally committed to Jesus Christ? Does the Holy Spirit have a monopoly on you? Are you willing tonight to say, 'I want that mountain...it belongs to me...God promised me victory and whether I am 8 or 85, I want it, and I'm going to claim it.'"

"Father, bring the message to our hearts, I pray...to my own heart...and Lord I pray that no matter what age You carry me to heaven, Lord I'll have the sword in my hand and I'll be climbing. Lord, we know You want to move us to higher ground and to greater victory. Help us Lord to obey. In Jesus' name,

Amen