

This past Sunday Barry preached from Numbers 13:16-14:4. In this passage of scripture the people refuse to go into the promised land due to their unbelief. So in the sermon this week Barry described for us what unbelief looks like calling us to avoid unbelief and instead put our trust in the promises of God. What does this unbelief look like that we are called to avoid? It is rooted in pride, fear and lies. It is rooted in pride in that it doubts the validity of God's promises and places our own desires above the purposes of God. This leads to fear in embracing God's promises as we begin to convince ourselves that what God has promised is really not good at all. In other words, according to many of those who had gone in and actually seen the land, the land that flows with milk and honey now becomes a land that devours the people who live in it. God's promise is twisted in a way that brings fear instead of hope. The final element of this unbelief is just a flat denial of God's promise. So instead of God's promise that he would bless Israel and through them the nations of the world, Israel now laments, "Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" This is a denial of course of the blessing that God promised his people as they carried out his purposes in the world. This is how unbelief works and it is what God wants us as his people to avoid. Instead God calls us to trust him, to trust that the good things he has promised will come to pass, to trust that he will establish his kingdom in the earth through us. And he has proven that his good purposes will prevail in us and in the world by giving up his own Son for us.

Consider these questions together this week as you gather for house church:

1. What is the root of unbelief? How do we keep from slipping into unbelief?
2. Where do you see evidence in your own life of unbelief? Are you seeing God work to strengthen your faith?
3. What made Caleb so sure that the people could take the land even though there were giants there? What makes you confident as you look at situations that seem challenging and beyond your ability?
4. What does true faith look like in practice? What would it have looked like in the life of Israel and what should it look like for us?
5. Share other ways that the sermon helped or is helping you this week.