

7) Resiliency when facing discouraging odds or undertaking great, daunting projects (Joshua and Caleb; David and Goliath)

NUMBERS 13 AND 14 “OUR COMPETENCE COMES FROM GOD”

Caleb and Joshua were made from different spiritual cloth than the other ten spies that were sent to explore the promised land.

They were able to look beyond the giants who inhabited the land. Instead, they focused on the God who had delivered them from Egypt, and who promised that his power would be with them to overcome the great odds that they faced.

Joshua and Caleb did not see themselves *in themselves*, but rather *in God*.

Success is often connected to self-esteem and self image. If we see ourselves as competent and worthy in God, this will give us the confidence to undertake great challenges; to believe that whatever we undertake will be successful and lasting.

2 Corinthians 3

3 *Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from*

you? **2** You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. **3** You show that you are a letter from Christ, **the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.**

4 Such confidence we have through Christ before God. **5** Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. **6** He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Entrepreneurial people generally are possessed of this healthy inner core that enables them to see themselves as wholesome and deserving.

Christians believe that this wholesomeness doesn't come from them, but rather from this loving God that has **adopted them and endowed them** with this worthiness.

2 Timothy 1:9:

9 He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus **before the beginning of time,**

When we focus on our deficiencies, or a poor track record, or negative life experiences that have shaped our self-image, then we will naturally lack the confidence to undertake ambitious actions.

But when we see ourselves as loved and endorsed by God, backed by his promises and faithfulness, endowed with his wisdom and power, then we are free to undertake great actions confidently.

Joshua had this sense of confidence and worthiness before he had undertaken the great challenges that awaited him as Moses' successor.

But right before crossing the Jordan into Canaan, God again reminded him of this: **Joshua 1:5ff**

5 *No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.*

6 *Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.*

7 *“Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. **8** Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. **9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. **Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”***

Joshua and Caleb saw and acknowledged the giants. They did not ignore them. But they chose to focus on the

beauty and the fruitfulness of the land where they were going.

They focused on the faithfulness of God, who had delivered them before.

The fact that God was with them made all the difference in the world. “If God is with us who can be against us?”

This idea of being rooted in God is of paramount importance. As I’ve said before, we have to arrive at that point where we are more God-conscious than world-conscious.

In this state, we approach the world and human relationships from this radical God-consciousness and supernatural outlook.

From this perspective, the natural, rational considerations become almost irrelevant in comparison with the paradigms of Scripture. We become much more concerned with supernatural principles and promises than with human circumstances or difficulties. We are deeply convinced that the power of God is way beyond any obstacle that may come our way.

Christians with a supernatural outlook understand that evangelistic success in this culture will not come from

dressing the right way or using a certain language, or marketing the Church in a certain fashion.

They are not concerned about the future of the church. They know that the Church is invincible, and that it will always prevail. They know that if they focus on God and proceed based upon biblical principles, they will succeed in whatever they undertake, including advancing the Kingdom in the midst of a hostile culture.

1 SAMUEL 17:45-47

45 David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. 47 All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord’s, and he will give all of you into our hands.”

Caleb and Joshua saw the potential rewards of the promised land instead of the risks.

Resilient people acknowledge that every great opportunity often entails great risk. They don’t let the risks outweigh the promise of great rewards. They calculate and manage the risk, and proceed courageously.

Resilient people are possessed of an extraordinary confidence. Resilient believers know that if they have the favor of God with them, then they will be victorious in their struggles and challenges.

It is important to clarify that just having confidence and trusting in God is not enough to ensure victory in our undertakings. Wisdom is necessary. Discernment is important. Saturating our efforts with prayer is crucial. We must be reasonably confident that we are moving in God's will and timing. Active faith grounded in God and not in ourselves is also crucial.

Success in life depends on a subtle mixture of these different elements. But as we grow in knowledge and experience, as we ground our life on the principles of the Word of God, all of the pieces will fall together, and we will be able to assemble that magical formula that is the divine platform for success, especially when we are undertaking huge obstacles.