

Giants
Next Steps
November 8, 2020
Numbers 13:25-33

OPENING PRAYER:

Holy God, all things are yours. You experience no shortages, no scarcity, no lack or deficiency, and you share your wealth with us. You are generous always, unrestrained in the outpouring of your grace. Your mercy is unending. Your love is relentless. Your compassion is unbounded. You reveal your truth to us. You imprint us with your image. You illumine our lives with the light of your presence. We are as rich as kings, yet far too often we live as paupers. Embolden us to grow into the sons and daughters you have created us to be, by the power of your Spirit who resides within us. For the sake of Christ and his kingdom we pray. Amen.

BREAKING THE ICE:

- What did you agree/disagree with the sermon this week?
- Are you a pessimist or an optimist?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:¹

God freed the Israelites from slavery, walked them through the Red Sea and led them through the wilderness preparing them for the Promised Land. On the verge of entering the land, the spies return with their report and the people refuse to enter. Read their story in Numbers 13:25-33.

- What jumps out at you in this scripture?
- In Exodus 7-15, the Israelites already had several victories and conquered other peoples. What is different in this passage?
- What would you say about the Israelites as this story ends?
- When do you feel like a grasshopper? What giants are you facing right now?
- Where are you in your spiritual life?

MORE TO PONDER:

While serving as District Superintendent I often asked congregations what they were planning for the next year that could not be accomplished without God's intervention. The Bible is filled with stories of accomplishments that were achieved only as God's people sought, accepted, and invested power from beyond themselves, God's power to achieve their God-honored goals. Far too often we try to do far too much on our own, forgetting that there is help available from the One who made us, loves us, and walks with us in all of life's experiences. Today, instead of getting stressed out because I have too much to do, I will ask God to guide me in my yes and no to tasks and opportunities that come my way. And then, I will ask God to inspire, bless, and grant wisdom, energy and strength beyond my own to do what God has placed in my hands to accomplish. How will you approach the opportunities and tasks that await you? ---Bishop Rueben Job, When You Pray

- What strikes you about this passage?
- What task is before you that you have yet to invite God into the process? What has been holding you back? What will help?
- How would your life be different if you asked God 'to guide me in my yes and no to tasks and opportunities that come my way'?

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Your light is the only light I need
as I travel through life's mystery.
Your word the only voice I hear
that still small voice that leads me
to the place where I should be.
Your presence is the only company I need
as I walk this narrow road.
Your fellowship the warmth I crave
to help me on my way.

--John Birch,

¹ Adapted from *The Serendipity Bible* (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1998)