

A Different Spirit by Pastor Lynn Peterson **Invite God Ministries** 4-22-07

Did you ever notice how many negative people there are out there? Anytime someone wants to do something creative or important or hard, somebody is right there telling him or her that it can't be done.

When Steve told people he was going to apply to medical school, oh my did he hear comments. "Oh it's pretty tough to get in to med school. You wouldn't want to get your hopes up. Don't feel bad if you don't get in. You should give up that foolishness." And then once in a blue moon someone would encourage him with a positive remark like, "nothing ventured, nothing gained". But the majority of comments came from the naysayer's. And do you think it stopped once he was accepted into medical school? Fat chance. People gave him statistics on how many doctors they knew who were receiving counseling because it was such a tough life and of course they didn't forget to give him the statistics on the high divorce rate among doctors. Incidentally Steve and I have been married for 34 years.

So where do all those negative people come from? Are all those people just born negative? Well we are born into sin. But what the negative comments come from is **unbelief**. Many people don't believe for anything that is hard. Look at the Israelites. God delivered them out of Egypt with spectacular miracles. But all along the way to the promise land what did they say? We are going to die in the wilderness. What was that? It was **unbelief**. Finally the Lord just got sick of it and said, ok, I have heard this murmuring so many times you get your way. I am going to let you die in the wilderness. I mean they sent spies to check out the promise land and what did they find? [Numbers 13:18-20, 25-28](#) See what the land is like and find out whether the people living there are strong or weak, few or many. ¹⁹What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? Do their towns have walls or are they unprotected? ²⁰How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there many trees? Enter the land boldly, and bring back samples of the crops you see."

²⁵After exploring the land for forty days, the men returned ²⁶to Moses, Aaron, and the people of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran. They reported to the whole community what they had seen and showed them the fruit they had taken from the land. ²⁷This was their report to Moses: "We arrived in the land you sent us to see, and it is indeed a magnificent country—a land flowing with milk and honey. Here is some of its fruit as proof.

They found a land flowing with milk and honey. They called it magnificent. But then what did they say? ²⁸But the people living there are powerful, and their cities and towns are fortified and very large. We also saw the descendants of Anak who are living there!

Now the descendants of Anak were giants. So what they were saying was, we can't

take the land---- there are giants in the land. And what were they really saying? We don't believe God is able to deliver us. They were afraid. Is that unbelief? You betcha! Can fear cause unbelief? You betcha!

How many negative people are there for every one positive one? Well in the Israelites case there were 12 spies, 10 negative and 2 positive Joshua and Caleb so that is for every 5 negative there was only one positive. That is not too bad, but it got worse. The ten talked the whole community into unbelief. This shows you how important it is to find those 1 or 2 people who can encourage us in the positive. Don't listen to the 80 plus% who say it can't be done and it certainly can't be done by you.

Caleb's response pleased God. "[But my servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it](#)" (Numbers 14:24).

God said Caleb had a different spirit.

We have the Holy Spirit. If God says "do it" don't you think He will give you the ability to succeed? One of Pastor Dan Stones favorite rhymes is When God guides He provides.

Do you believe that? When God guides, He provides. When God told the children of Israel to go and take the promise land, do you believe He would provide the means for them to do it? It is a bit easier for us to believe that for them then to believe instances in our own lives.

It is so easy to see how others are negative and in unbelief. But let us take inventory of our own lives today.

What does the New Testament have to say about unbelief? Let's look at the parable of sower one more time. The farmer sowed on the hard ground, rocky ground, weedy ground and good ground. Now traditionally we take that parable and apply it to non-Christians.

Sow the word and some of it falls on hard ground and those are the people that never get saved.

Sow the word on rocky ground and people may accept Jesus but their roots don't grow deep and the sun comes and their faith dies.

Sow the word on weedy ground and the weeds (cares of the world) choke it out so they are saved but they don't produce any fruit.

And then of course there is the wonderful good soil, sow the word and it grows and produces 30, 60, 100 times-- that is you guys!

Now let us look again at this parable and relate it to the person who is already a Christian. Sow the word, be it a prophecy or Scripture and some Christian hearts are hard and they simply don't believe the word. "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life". Is that scriptural? Yes! The **hard ground** Christian replies, God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life but the hard ground Christian is thinking, "that is not true for me. I think God has to love me but not that much. I will get into heaven. But I don't know about a wonderful plan. My life has been pretty tough and I don't want to get my hopes up that it will get better. I am not that worthy. God has plenty to do, God loves other people more than me. He can't be bothered with me. "

Ever felt that way? I have. I have had times in my life where I been there. Do you know that God didn't want me witnessing when I was young. You say how can that be? I was scared and hated even the thought of witnessing. But I wanted to be obedient. So I was very excited when I got paired with a pastor to go out and witness in a park. I was going to watch a real pro. Do you know that we couldn't find one person who would let us talk to them? All the other groups connected with non-Christians and got to share their faith. Why didn't we? God didn't want me out there witnessing. Well if you were God would you send out someone who doesn't believe what they are saying? If I go around saying in monotone, "God has a wonderful plan for your life" I used monotone back then because I had not experienced that wonderful life and I did not truly believe it. So who was I going to convince? The non-Christians would say, "why would I want that? I don't want to be like you. You have no fun. You are no fun. Stay away from me." God wanted to change my stony heart of unbelief and show me how deep his love was for me. I was so afraid he would be disappointed in me. I didn't dare believe His love was that deep for me. I was afraid I would find out I was horribly mistaken. My earthly dad's love seemed conditional. If I didn't meet his expectations, I would fall out of favor. And there was no way to meet someone's expectations when they are irrational and my dad was irrational. It was a real eye opener to me when God said to me one day, "I am not irrational". Isn't that something? God had to tell me that He is not irrational. My fear of rejection kept my heart in that hard path unbelief. You see the enemy is not fair. You can have the best intentions and be working your hardest to please God and be obedient and still have a hard heart full of unbelief. We need to ask the Lord to plow up our hard hearts and make them soft for him and makes them hearts that can believe all his promises. Including the good ones about us.

The next soil is the rocky ground. The rocky ground Christian hears, "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life". Great! Where is it? And if it doesn't come in the next 2 days or maybe it doesn't come in the next 5 years, then they become discouraged and refuse to believe it will ever come.

And haven't we all become discouraged? Have you ever been that way? I have. I

remember crying out to the Lord because I wanted to hear his voice and I didn't seem to be hearing much. And I cried and I cried and I cried and I was so discouraged and Satan told me that God didn't really love me and that God didn't want to talk to me and I was so discouraged trying to come against those lies before I finally learned that God talks to me all the time and I needed to be patient and learn how to tune in and listen. The enemy is not fair. He plants things that cause unbelief even when we are in our mother's womb. The enemy causes us to experience situations where circumstances do not meet up with the promises. But we have to learn not to rely on circumstances but to trust in the promises even when they look impossible. [Is anything too hard for our God?](#)

When we become discouraged we need to ask the Lord to plow up our hard hearts of unbelief and make them soft for him and makes them hearts willing to wait for and believe all his promises.

The waiting tests our heart to see if it is soft or hard with unbelief. Satan who is author of spirit of unbelief wants us to be impatient. God teaches us patience and to wait on him. Waiting on God is the key for growth. Waiting on God is the key for growth. Waiting on God is the key for growth. Waiting on the Lord is good good good good!

The weedy soil Christian hears ["God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life"](#). Great! But then they get busy with their own agenda and life and when God speaks quietly to them to show them what direction they need to go to get to this wonderful plan they are so busy they don't hear Him and they don't go and they miss God's best for themselves. Have you ever done that? I have. I have wanted to be in charge of my life and set my own agendas. I have been busy doing what I wanted to do or thought I should be doing so that I have not tuned in or even asked what God wanted. I have allowed the good things I was doing to crowd out God's best for me. You see the enemy is not fair. Sometimes he tricks us into getting excited about good things so we miss God's best. Sometimes he tricks us into thinking our worldly living is actually more fun and we miss God's best.

When our lives become crowded and we start losing sight of what God really wants we need to ask the Lord to plow up our hard hearts of unbelief and make them soft for him. What's the lie? The lie is that our plan will be more rewarding than God's plan. We need to ask Him to make our hearts willing to believe that God's plan is the best for us.

The last soil is the soft good soil. When the good soil Christian hears, ["God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life"](#) the soft soil and the soft heart believes it unconditionally and embraces God's plan and cooperates with God. Have you ever been like that? I bet you have. I have. There are times when I embrace God's plan with my whole heart and soul. And what is the result? The fruit that is produced is 30-60- 100 times what was planted.

Do you and I have any unbelief in our lives today? God knows we do.

What are words we don't believe?

1. "you are awesome because you are made in the image of God". Do you believe that down in your heart? If you don't believe that for yourself then your heart is hard with unbelief.

2. What about the Scripture that says,

"You reap what you sow." do you believe that? If you believe that what are you sowing? Are you sowing good deeds? Or are you sowing anger or bitterness or unforgiveness?

You know that Jacob tricked his brother with deception to get his brother's birth right and the father's blessing. Now he got those things what did he experience after that? Well he went to live with good old Uncle Laban and got cheated not once, not twice but 10 times in wages and got tricked into marrying Leah when he was promised Rachel. Does that sound like reaping what you sow? If we really believe that we will reap what we sow then we should be sowing good things.

3. **Shame Psalm 34:5 Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces.**

Do you believe you don't have to live in shame if you seek God's help? If we don't believe that for ourselves then our heart is hard with unbelief. And again, let me remind you that the enemy does not play fair.

How are we doing? Are we mostly negative or positive? The goal of course is to be more positive. To be more believing. To break the spirit of unbelief out of our lives so we can receive all He has for us and those around us too. Remember the 10 spies who influenced the children of Israel not to fight? That was their inheritance they lost. It was no small thing.

Are we talking anyone out of their inheritance? That is what the negative voices in Steve's life were trying to do--talk him out of his inheritance of medical school. That was God's plan for his life. I know a couple people who thought they were suppose to go to medical school but got talked out of it. They regret it. If someone you know has big plans, encourage them. What if they are delusional as you suspect (joke 😊)--what harm will it cause? God is in charge we don't need to judge. Often we judge from our worldly wisdom not from God. We need to encourage people to think big and encourage them to hear from God for themselves. There is a spirit of unbelief in the world and the spirit of unbelief tries to play God.

Maybe you got talked out of your inheritance. If the opportunity is lost, forgive those in unbelief who helped talk you out of it and seek the Lord for a new inheritance. God still has a wonderful plan for your life. Be faithful in the little things and God will provide bigger things.

A retired lady I know felt led by God to go witness at the Cozy bar in downtown Duluth. Do you know that the women in her church were so fearful for her that they prayed she would be sick so she couldn't go! That is unbelief. But this lady and a friend went anyway and went into that bar and witnessed. And you know what? They were well received. You see she didn't know it but one of the bar tenders goes to Hillside Community Church and is a Christian and has been praying for people to come into the bar and witness. God had been preparing a way..... But the spirit of unbelief through other Christians was trying to keep her out of that bar. Can you imagine how pleased the Lord was with this woman and her friend?

God has incredible blessings and miracles. These blessing and miracles can be stolen away from us by this deceitful spirit of unbelief.

See the enemy of this world promotes negative talk and unbelief. You can see it in our media. What do they love to report? They love to report gloom and doom and negative stuff. They report all the stuff that will cause us to be what? --discouraged and full of unbelief. But our God is positive. He is not like that. He is so positive.

God is looking for believers who will look at their circumstances with eyes of faith-- people who will, despite all odds, believe for what God can do in any situation. Can we believe Him despite all odds? [Deut. 29:4 \(NLT\)](#) But to this day the Lord has not given you minds that understand, nor eyes that see, nor ears that hear!

But in Proverbs we are told it is a gift.

[Proverbs 20:12 \(NLT\)](#) Ears to hear and eyes to see—both are gifts from the Lord.

[Matthew 11:15 \(NLT\)](#) Anyone who is willing to hear should listen and understand!

The key is we need to be willing. Are you willing to see with the eyes of faith and hear with the ears of faith?

The question is "who is in control?" If we believe that God is in control than we can see it through the eyes of faith. And God is so excited when we do. [Luke 18:27 \(NLT\)](#) Jesus replied, "What is impossible from a human perspective is possible with God."

Do you believe that? Everything is possible with God!

God is also looking for people who will remind the Body of Christ of God's great power and thereby encourage them. [Jeremiah 32:27](#) "I am the Lord, the God of all the peoples of the world. Is anything too hard for me?"

Will we rise up and be one of those who encourage God's people with a positive spirit and with belief? Will we tell them what our Lord has to say?

Caleb and Joshua gave the positive report [Numbers 13:30 \(NLT\)](#) But Caleb tried to

encourage the people as they stood before Moses. "Let's go at once to take the land," he said. "We can certainly conquer it!"

Caleb saw the giants. But he also had the eyes to see how big his God was. He said, "Do not rebel against the Lord; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them" (Numbers 14:9).

Caleb's response pleased God. "But my servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it" (Numbers 14:24).

God said Caleb had a different spirit.

See, Joshua and Caleb represent the spirit of belief.

We have the challenge to have a different spirit to have the spirit of belief. God is so pleased with those who trust in Him. His promises are yes and amen! If He has shown you your promised land, then believe He will lead you into that promise. **2 Cor. 10:5 (NIV)** We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. in other words we need to pull down unbelief, take every thought captive and let Christ soften our hearts so we will believe His promises and be obedient to him.

If God says you can do it, then you can do it.

So in summary we know that negativism is just unbelief. There is a spirit of unbelief that tries to rob us of our inheritance.

We all have areas in our lives where there is hardness and unbelief just like the parable of the sower with the hard path, rocky soil, and weedy soil. The hard path Christian doesn't believe the word for himself. The rocky soil Christian is impatient and isn't willing to wait. The weedy soil Christian has his own agenda and is too busy to follow the Lord's leading. The good soil Christian believes God, embraces God's plan and cooperates with God. We need to ask the Lord to plow up our hard hearts and make them soft for him and make them hearts like the good soil that can believe all his promises and embrace his plans for us.

Waiting on God tests our hearts and waiting on God is a key for growth. Waiting on the Lord is good good good good!

The enemy doesn't play fair and he often tricks us. He operates through a spirit of unbelief.

God has incredible blessings and miracles for us if we are willing to put down our unbelief.

God is so positive and when God guides, He provides. When God guides He provides.

Joshua and Caleb represent the spirit of belief

Resolve to be like Caleb and Joshua who were willing to look at the circumstances with eyes of faith and encourage others to do the same.

You can be the Joshuas and Calebs. You can be the ones with the different spirit. You can be the ones who are positive like your heavenly father and you can be the ones who encourage others and speak with a different spirit which is so pleasing to God.