

21

5-minute Children's Messages for Sunday Morning!

GLASS HALF FULL: Joshua and Caleb

PROPS

A half full glass of water

KEY SCRIPTURE

Numbers 13-14

I want all of you to take a close look at this glass of water. Look closely at how much water is in here.

(Give the students a minute to look.)

By show of hands, who thinks the glass is half empty? Who thinks it is half full?

The truth is that you're both right. If the glass is half full, then it is also half empty. But some people like to use this sort of question as a test of your personality. An optimist looks at the positive: The glass is half full. The pessimist looks at the negative: The glass is half empty.

There's a story in the Bible about optimists and pessimists that changed the future for an entire nation. The children of Israel had traveled out of slavery in Egypt toward the Promised Land, the land of Canaan that God promised to their forefather Abraham. When they arrived at the border of Canaan, their leader Moses sent 12 spies into the Promised Land.

When the spies came back, two of the men—Joshua and Caleb—reported that the Promised Land was everything God had said it was. It was a land filled with milk and honey. It was ripe for the taking. God was faithful, and God was going to fulfill his every promise.

But 10 of the spies brought back a different story. Canaan was dangerous, a land filled with giants and terrifying warriors! Their cities were well-fortified, and the people were skilled warriors!

So which of the two groups were right, the 10 who saw giants or Joshua and Caleb?

They were both right. Canaan was the Promised Land, a land of milk and honey. But it was also a country of giants. God had promised to give this land to the Israelites, but after all the miracles God had performed to lead the Israelites to the Promised Land, to whom do you think they listened? They listened to the 10 men who talked about the giants. They were so afraid of the giants, some of them said they were better off being slaves in Egypt!

Because the Israelites ignored Joshua and Caleb, God punished the entire nation. They were forced to wander in the wilderness for 40 years until every one of them had died. God would let their children, led by Joshua, enter the Promised Land instead.

One day, you will be faced with your own giants—challenges that seem impossible to overcome. When that day comes, there may be people telling you to give up. But if God has made a promise to you, be careful that you listen to him and not to the pessimists. Believing in the Lord is not mere optimism. It's called faithfulness, and when you are faithful to the Lord, the Lord will be faithful and bless you with all that he's promised!