**Forget Me Not**

**The Word**

Read together Numbers 13:1-3, 25-32

**The Big Idea**

Remembering God’s faithfulness in the past can help us approach the present and the future with great faith, confidence, and courage.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Consider the various people in this week’s passage: Caleb and Joshua, the other 10 leaders, Moses and Aaron, the Israelites and their families. Where do you imagine yourself in the story, and what do you imagine yourself thinking and doing?

2. Consider the relational dynamics at play and the various challenges that Joshua and Caleb faced. What most stands out to you about them that you would like to emulate?

3. Consider your own ability to “convert” your experience of God’s faithfulness in past challenges with your ability to face new challenges with greater faith and confidence. Do you find yourself facing new challenges with increasing faith or confidence? Why or why not?

4. As you look at your life right now and what is before you, where are you tempted towards fear and lack of faith in God? How can your home group support and pray for you in that?

**Sermon Outline**

I. God’s Faithfulness to Israel up to that point

A. God had provided for Joseph and his family through a famine

B. God saves Moses from an infant death and then, as an adult, calls him to lead Israel out of slavery in Egypt.

C. God brings plagues on Egypt convincing them to let His people go.

D. God parts the Red Sea as the Israelites cross and then causes it to collapse and destroy Egypt’s army.

E. God provides manna, quail and water in miraculous ways to care for the Israelites.

II. The Present Moment

A. 10 spies see the beauty and fruitfulness of the land but also the obstacles in conquering the people there.

 B. 2 spies see it all and trust in God’s ability to bring them safely into the land.

III. Forgetting God’s faithfulness in the past

A. Leads to fear

1. When we forget what God has done, we only focus on what is ahead of us and we do so often in fear.

2. Giants (13:32), powerful people (13:28), fortified cities (13:28), land will devour us! (13:32)

3. When we face the challenges and difficulties that life presents **and** we forget what God has done in the past, we live in fear. All we can envision is the bad. We can be fearful in school, in our families, relationships, sports, health….

 B. Leads to a collapse of faith

1. The ten spies and then all the people simply could not believe that God could do something miraculous and give them the land as He promised. They had forgotten that God had already destroyed the armed forces of the mighty nation of Egypt. With state-of-the-art training and equipment, the Egyptian army was one of, if not the greatest, military force of the day. God had destroyed them and given Israel the victory. Certainly, he could have dealt handily with the various minor city-states in the promised land. But all that was forgotten and so there was no confidence, no faith in what could do going forward.

2. So, it is today, when we forget what God has done, we lose faith and confidence in what he can do going forward. Our faith and confidence in God melts away.

C. Leads to following leaders who fuel the fear and stoke the doubt and faithlessness.

1. Tribalism: Ten of the tribal leaders, forgetting all that God had one, shared a report that caused and then fueled fear and faithlessness among the people. And the people, forgetting what God had done, followed their lead …….in the wrong direction.

2. Similarly, the Sanhedrin would fuel fear and lead the people to demand Jesus’ crucifixion.

IV. Fortitude

 A. Caleb and Joshua (see Numbers 13:30, 14:6-9)

1. Both Joshua and Caleb believe that God is with them and whatever He wills to do, will happen as God intends. Their only responsibility is to remain faithful to God and trust Him completely. Their attitude all begins with remembering all that God had done to bring them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, across the desert and leading them to the edge of the promised land.

2. They speak with hope and confidence and claim that God will lead us into the land and give it to us (14:8). There does not appear to be a sliver of fear.

3. They reject the leadership of the ten spies and along with Moses and Aaron call on the people of God to follow them as they follow God. And this then is my final thought, when we remember the faithfulness of God, we are not prone to following leaders away from God.

 B. Likewise us today

As we remember God’s faithful work in our lives in the past, we can find, hope, confidence, and the ability to discern godly leadership.