

I Wanna Be Like Caleb

Ready:

“So here I am today, eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as when Moses sent me out; I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then.”

-Joshua 14:10b-11 (NIV)

Set

Remember the sports drink commercials that featured Michael Jordan? And who can forget the movie Space Jam? You would see ads for everything from shoes to t-shirts that screamed “I want to be like Mike!” There was a Michael Jordan craze when he won championships with the Bulls, and that was mainly because he was an incredible athlete. But even with all his moves, passes, dunks and accompanying fame, Michael Jordan has nothing on Caleb the Kenizzite.

Caleb was the Jack La Lanne (a.k.a. the “godfather of fitness”) of his time and then some. Caleb was one of the men Moses sent to scope out the Promised Land when he was 40 years old. Along with Joshua, Caleb gave a report that was based on truth and was not afraid to follow “the Lord wholeheartedly.” For that, he was promised the land on which his feet had walked as an inheritance.

Now fast forward 45 years. Moses was dead, and Joshua was now leading the Israelites to the Promised Land. Only Joshua and Caleb were alive from the first generation of Israelites and able to settle in the land that he and Caleb spied on 45 years earlier. At this point, Caleb asked for his inheritance from Joshua. This is where the story gets interesting.

At that point, Caleb was 85 years old. By his own admission, he told Joshua that he was as “strong today as when Moses sent” him out to be a spy. Caleb must have been an awesome physical specimen! He was a pre-Jack La Lanne; an “I wanna be like Mike” type of guy. I say this because the land that he asked for was Hebron. That part of the country was hill country-- tough to herd animals and farm, for sure. And if that wasn't tough enough, it was occupied by the Anakites: the giants! To give you an idea of their size, the Anakites were related to the Rephaites (Deuteronomy 2:11). Og, the King of Bashan, was a remnant of the Rephaites, and the Word tells us that his bed was made of iron and was 13 feet long and 6 feet wide (Deuteronomy. 3:11). Og either liked a lot of room for tossing and turning, or he needed the room for his large frame. I'm guessing the later.

So, Caleb, not only survived 40 years of wandering in the desert, he also wanted the challenge of farming the hill country and driving out giants from his inheritance. I don't know many 85-year-olds willing to take on that type of retirement.

Here's the point: Caleb listened to the Lord and waited patiently for his inheritance. Even in his old age, he was fit and spunky, to say the least, and willing to take on new challenges. My prayer is that you and I could be as fit and willing to take on new challenges well into our retirement years. There will be giants to fight in our athletic lives. They may not be as real as Og, but they will feel as big as Og. Sorry Mike, but I want to be like Caleb and be as strong as the Lord made me to be.

Go

1. How will maintaining physical fitness help me to obtain my spiritual inheritance? What can I do to achieve that?
2. How can I successfully farm in the hill country and defeat the giants in my life?
3. What will it take spiritually to do that?

Workout

Joshua 14:6-12

Psalms 18:30-50

Bible Reference:

Psalms 18



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