

Grasshoppers by Choice

Numbers 13 • The Three Hounds of Hell Series: Fear

PART ONE

Daily Devotional Monday–Friday

A 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide on the theme “Grasshoppers by Choice: Overcoming Fear Through Faith.”

DAY

1

MONDAY

You Are Not What Fear Says You Are

Reading • Numbers 13:25–33

The account of the twelve spies returning from Canaan, ten of whom reported that the people felt as small as grasshoppers in their own eyes.

Fear has a language, and it speaks in the first person. The ten spies did not wait for the giants to define them. They defined themselves first, reaching for the word grasshopper before anyone in Canaan ever opened their mouth. The tragedy was not what the giants thought. The tragedy was what the spies chose to believe about themselves. In the same way, many of us have written our own limiting reviews and filed them as facts. We have decided we are not qualified, not ready, not enough — and nobody asked us. God never invited you to size yourself up against the giants in your life. He invited you to hold the giants up against Him. The same God who split a sea, rained bread from heaven, and guided an entire nation with a pillar of fire is the God who is walking beside you today. His assessment of you is not grasshopper. His word says you are fearfully and wonderfully made, chosen, and set apart. Do not let fear write a report that God never authorized.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

What is one area of your life where you have been measuring yourself against the wrong standard? What would it look like to hold that situation up against the greatness of God instead?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Write down one negative belief you have carried about yourself. Beside it, write a specific promise from Scripture that directly contradicts it. Return to that promise every time the old belief surfaces this week.

A Different Spirit

Reading • Numbers 14:24

God declares that His servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows Him wholeheartedly, and therefore will be brought into the land.

Caleb stood in the same dry field as everyone else. He saw the same walls, heard the same bad report, and faced the same wilderness. But something in him refused to swarm with the crowd. The sermon reminds us that grasshoppers do not naturally travel in swarms. They are pushed together by drought. When things get dry — when finances are thin, relationships are strained, and hope feels distant — fear wants company. It wants to spread. It wants agreement. And so we share our doubts, we recruit others into our worry, and we call it being honest. But Caleb chose something different. He chose to stand with the minority who still believed God. The congregation around him was ready to stone him for it. And God called it a different spirit. You do not need the crowd to agree with you. You need the Spirit of God to lead you. Seek out people who carry faith even in dry seasons. Their courage is contagious just as much as fear is.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Who in your life carries a spirit of faith that challenges and encourages you? Are you currently surrounding yourself with voices that build your faith or voices that reinforce your fear?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Identify one person in your life who consistently points you toward God in hard times. Reach out to them this week. Share something you are trusting God for and invite them to pray with you.

Go Anyway

Reading • Joshua 6:1-5

God instructs Joshua and the Israelites to march around the walls of Jericho, promising that the walls will fall. The victory is declared before the battle begins.

An entire generation died within walking distance of a promise God had already put their name on. They surveyed the land and surrendered. They lost a fight they never showed up for. And 40 years later, a new generation walked up to those same walls — and God did not ask them if they felt ready. He told them to walk and shout. The walls came down without a single hand laid on them. The giants they feared, the walls that looked impossible, were already handled. God had a plan for those walls long before any Israelite ever saw them. The sermon asks a piercing question: have you been afraid of a wall that God already knocked down? Fear does not have to be right to win. It only has to be believed. And once you stop testing it, it might as well be true. But the word of God calls you to go anyway. Not when you feel strong enough. Not when the path is clear. Go because He said so.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

What is one step of obedience you have been delaying because you were waiting to feel ready? What would it mean to take that step this week, trusting that God has already gone before you?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Choose one thing you have been postponing out of fear — a conversation, an application, a commitment, a phone call. Take one concrete step toward it this week. Do not wait until the wall comes down. Walk toward it.

Born Again and Unafraid

Reading • John 3:1-8

Jesus tells Nicodemus that unless a person is born of water and the Spirit, they cannot enter the kingdom of God. The Spirit moves where it will, and those born of it carry a new nature.

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. Even in his curiosity, fear was present — fear of what others might say, fear of being seen, fear of what it might cost him to be associated with this teacher from Galilee. And Jesus met him right there in the dark and spoke to him about being born again. Baptism, as the sermon beautifully captures, is not about the power of the water. It is a public declaration of an inward change. It is the moment you say out loud that you belong to God. When you are born of the Spirit, you receive a new nature. You are no longer bound to the old measurements, the old fears, the old labels. The Spirit does not make you a slave to fear again. It brings you into adoption, into sonship and daughterhood, into the family of God. And in that family, you are never insignificant. You are never a grasshopper. You are an heir.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Have you fully embraced the new identity that Christ has given you through salvation? Are there old labels or old ways of seeing yourself that you have not yet surrendered to God?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Spend time in quiet prayer today and ask God to show you one area where you are still living according to your old nature rather than your new identity in Christ. Surrender that area to Him specifically and deliberately.

God Can Use a Bug

Reading • Exodus 10:12-15

God sends a swarm of locusts over Egypt as the eighth plague, covering the entire land and consuming everything in its path. A creature considered insignificant brings the most powerful empire on earth to its knees.

The sermon saves its most stunning moment for the end. The Israelites called themselves grasshoppers — small, insignificant, forgettable, the kind of creature nobody names and nobody misses. And the preacher points out that God had already used that exact creature to humble Pharaoh and bring an empire to its knees. They picked the word for something worthless, and God had already written that word into one of the greatest displays of His power in all of history. That is the God we serve. He does not need the most impressive instrument. He used a slingshot to drop a giant. He used a stick to open a sea. He used a jawbone to win a war. He used five loaves to feed five thousand people. And He used a bug to break a kingdom. Your smallness is not an obstacle to God. It may very well be His starting point. Do not disqualify yourself from what God is calling you to do simply because you feel like too little. You are not too little. You are exactly the kind of material God has always worked with best.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

In what ways have you allowed your sense of smallness or inadequacy to cause you to hold back from something God may be calling you toward? How does today's reading reframe what you thought was a limitation?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Write a short prayer of surrender this week. Offer God the very thing about yourself that you have considered a weakness or a disqualifier. Ask Him to use it for His glory. Then watch with expectation for how He responds.

This reading plan is designed to be used in personal quiet time, small group discussion, or as a supplement to the ongoing sermon series on fear and faith. Return to these passages throughout the week and allow God's word to continue speaking beyond a single reading.

Small Group Guide

Grasshoppers by Choice

OVERVIEW

This week's sermon drew from the account of the twelve spies sent into Canaan. Ten of them returned with a report rooted in fear, calling themselves grasshoppers in their own eyes before anyone in Canaan said a single word to them. The central challenge of the message was this: *we often choose to be small*. Fear makes us discount ourselves, seek comfort in company over courage, and surrender before we ever test the walls in front of us. But God's word reminds us that he has always been in the business of doing more with less.

OPENING PRAYER

Ask a group member to open in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to lead your conversation and to speak into any areas where fear has taken root in the group.

ICE BREAKER

Think of a time when you talked yourself out of something before anyone else had the chance to. What happened, and how did it turn out? Share briefly with the group.

KEY SCRIPTURE

Numbers 13:33

The spies described themselves as grasshoppers in their own eyes, and concluded that they appeared the same way to the inhabitants of Canaan.

Romans 8:14-17

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God, and as children they are also heirs of what God has promised.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

Fear makes us write our own bad reviews.

The ten spies called themselves grasshoppers before a single Canaanite said one word to them. In the same way, we often disqualify ourselves before anyone else gets the chance to.

2

We choose company over courage.

Like grasshoppers that swarm during drought, we tend to gather around shared fear and negativity when things get hard. But Caleb and Joshua had a different spirit, and God honored it.

3 **We never go to find out.**

The children of Israel surveyed the land and surrendered. They lost a fight they never showed up for. Fear does not have to be right to win; it only has to be believed.

4 **Small is God's specialty.**

God used a grasshopper, the very creature those men used to describe their insignificance, as one of the ten plagues that brought the most powerful empire on earth to its knees. God can use you no matter how small you feel.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Getting Into the Text

- 1 The ten spies said, "We were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." No Canaanite ever actually said that to them. Why do you think they reported their feelings as if they were facts? Have you ever done the same thing?
- 2 Caleb and Joshua saw the exact same land, the same walls, and the same giants as the other ten spies. What do you think made the difference in how they responded? What does it mean to have "a different spirit"?
- 3 The sermon pointed out that the congregation wanted to stone Caleb and Joshua, the only two people still telling the truth. Why do you think people sometimes react with hostility toward those who have hope when they do not?

Going Deeper

- 4 The pastor described three reasons we choose to be small. Which of the three resonated most with you personally, and why?
 - We choose our own size by measuring ourselves against the wrong things.
 - We choose company over courage.
 - We never go to find out.
- 5 The sermon said, "*We be not able is not humility in front of God. It is unbelief with good manners.*" How do you distinguish between genuine humility and fear that has dressed itself up to look like wisdom or caution?
- 6 God told the children of Israel in Numbers 14:28 that he would do to them exactly what they had spoken. What does that tell us about the power of the words we speak over our own lives and circumstances?
- 7 Romans 8:14–17 reminds us that we are not slaves to fear but adopted children and heirs of God. How does understanding your identity in Christ change the way you approach the giants in your life?

Personal Reflection

- 8 Is there something you have been standing at the edge of (a relationship, an opportunity, a calling, a conversation) that you have not stepped into because fear told you the walls were too high? What would it look like to go anyway?
- 9 The sermon closed with the reminder that God used a grasshopper to bring down Pharaoh. What is something about yourself that you have dismissed as too small or too broken for God to use?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

THIS WEEK, CHOOSE ONE:

☐ **Audit your inner voice.**

For the next seven days, pay attention to the moments when you disqualify yourself before anyone else does. Write them down. At the end of the week, bring that list before God and ask him to replace those words with what he says about you.

☐ **Change your company.**

Identify one relationship that consistently pulls you toward fear, negativity, or small thinking. Then identify one person who has a different spirit, someone whose faith challenges and encourages you. Be intentional about spending more time with the second person this week.

☐ **Go find out.**

Name one thing you have been afraid to test. This week, take one concrete step toward it. Apply for it. Make the call. Send the email. Show up. You do not have to feel ready. You simply have to go.

☐ **Speak differently about yourself.**

Find three scriptures that describe who God says you are. Write them somewhere visible (your mirror, your phone screen, your journal) and read them aloud every morning this week.

CLOSING REFLECTION

A whole generation of Israelites died within walking distance of something God had already put their name on. They were never asked to be strong enough. They were simply asked to go.

Take a quiet moment. Ask each group member to answer honestly:

What is one wall in your life that you have been afraid of that God may have already handled?

CLOSING PRAYER

Close by praying specifically over the walls and fears that were named in your group. Ask God to give each person the courage of Caleb: a different spirit that follows wholeheartedly, even when the field around them is swarming with doubt.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next week's sermon will continue the series on fear, focusing on the idea that **what kept us safe can also keep us small**. Consider reflecting on Matthew's Gospel before gathering again, and come ready to discuss what comfort, habits, or familiar things God might be calling you to release in order to move forward with him.