

# No Retirement In The Lord's Work

September 16, 2011 by [Phil Barnes](#)

Filed under [Articles on Christian Living](#) [Bulletin Articles](#) [Guidance from our Shepherds](#) [Guidance on the Christian Life](#)



Our culture in the USA has taught us that you work hard until 65 or 70 and then it's time to retire from everything, relax, and do whatever your heart desires or in other words, nothing at all, including spiritually. That's not what we read in the Bible. Take the story of Caleb. Caleb stands as an inspiring and encouraging example of having enormous spiritual energy at the age of 85. He first appears as one of the 12 spies that Moses sent out to scout the land of Canaan. Upon returning, all 12 men confirmed the land's beautiful layout, but 10 of the scouts focused on the land's fearless inhabitants ([Num. 13:31-33](#)). Joshua and Caleb believed that God would find a way for Israel to conquer the Canaanites ([Num. 14:6-9](#)), telling the Israelites to immediately take the land ([Num.13:30](#)), but the people wanted to stone both Joshua and Caleb ([Num. 14:1-4, 10](#)). God protected them and punished the people ([Num. 14:11-38](#)). Later, God rewarded Caleb and Joshua for their faithfulness. Among all those who left Egypt, Caleb and Joshua were the only ones to enter the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey.

I'm sure that Caleb witnessed many people die over the 45 year period of wandering in the wilderness, but his faith did not diminish in that time ([Josh. 14:6-15](#)). In ([Josh. 14:10-11](#)), Caleb states, " today, I am 85 years old. I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then." (NLT version)

WOW, 85 years old and Caleb still had the spunk of a 40 year old. I'm sure that Caleb helped preach over several funerals too, over that 45 year period in the wilderness, and he still had a great attitude and faith in his creator. I'm also impressed with the fact that since Joshua was in the spotlight after the death of Moses, Caleb was not jealous, but faithful in serving God in whatever situation he was in, to the fullest, and didn't lose his spiritual energy or zeal for serving God. He never made an excuse because of his age either. His testimony reveals his character and rock solid faith in God and his promises.

We need to overcome the obstacles, including the doubts and fears in our lives, as Caleb did, and accept the reliable promises of God with staunch faith and courage even in our golden years. It's very encouraging to see older men like Ward Hogland, preaching Christ at 87, as strong as he did in his 40's, with the courage and conviction to preach the truth. When I see men like Bill Cavender, who preached the gospel up until a few months before his death, whose faith never wavered, and he looked so forward to being with God, even though he'd miss his earthly family here; that is encouraging and teaches us what Biblical faith is all about. As we approach our later years and are rounding 3<sup>rd</sup> base, let's serve God with unabated vigor, serving God faithfully and believing in his promises, trusting his grace, until our last breath, just like Caleb did.

— Phil Barnes