

I see a CHURCH

Part 1 • August 23, 2026 | Pastor Jason Smotherman

LOCATING THE PROMISE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PROBLEM

Numbers 13 -14 we read of the story of the 12 Spies and their journey to scout out the Promise Land.

That true real life story has brought many valuable lessons:

- God rewards Faith
- Fear is contagious
- Bad reports can be factually correct and spiritually wrong
- The Promise isn't the absence of Giants
- There is a difference between being delivered from something and being ready for something

NUMBERS 13:33 (NKJV)

We were like grasshoppers in our own sight.

Self perspective is a powerful thing. Think to highly (Pride). Think to lowly (Insecurity). Think properly (godliness leads to courage powered by faith).

There are definitely giants in our land. There is definitely a promise given to this land. Two things can be true at the same time.

I love Grants Pass. I love this Mission Field. The Giants are more obvious to me than when I first arrived.

INSTITUTIONAL DISTRUST

(Cultural phenomena, not just a GP thing)

- Doctors - Vaccines
- Gov't - Fraud and Corruption
- Schools - Crazy ideology
- Family cornerstone - Broken and shattered
- News - What is truth?
- Justice - Criminals go free - lawlessness abounds.
- Church - scandal after scandal

Institutional distrust, creates an environment where meaningful connection is impossible. There is a conundrum we as leaders face in high distrust atmospheres, for example:

Pre-school Ministry:

Safety is a priority. Backgrounds checks, trainings, and an environment of teaching the little's about Jesus. Transparency and access is important. Parents want to know who is teaching, what are they teaching, where are they going to be and what are they doing

Giving:

We have given, on average over the last 4 years, an estimated 100k -150k to areas of need outside of our church. Do we announce every place and person we give? Scripture teaches us to not let our right hand know what are left hand is doing. If we don't share people assume their giving isn't making an impact but if we do share people say that you're sharing to make yourself look good.

POVERTY MINDSET

Poverty mindset is that which convinces people they can't have healthy and full lives. It shows itself in addiction, relational dysfunction, finances, or envy of other's success.

JAMES 3:16 (KJV)

For where there is envy and strife, there is confusion and every evil work.

Envy - painful or unhappy feeling when you see someone else have a good thing.

Strife - angry, bitter, violent conflict, disagreement, and struggle between people.

Check the local community chats and have a good laugh. Envy creates competition. Competition creates strife. Strife creates confusion. Confusion creates an environment where evil can flourish.

ORPHAN SPIRIT

Feeling of not belonging, especially to the family of God. When family is struggling naturally, it will become a giant spiritually. Especially seen in those who are committed followers of Jesus. Unintentional consequence of a non honoring culture.

Not one person is to blame, but a group to consider. Pastors who try to "protect" their kingdom without giving place for equipping and releasing creates and fosters an orphan spirit.

ROMANS 8:15 (NIV)

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to son-ship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

You are made whole by Him, not us. Our job is to build you up into wholeness.

EPHESIANS 4:12-16 (NIV)

¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Church (the servant leaders) is the agent to edify or build up believers to grow into spiritual maturity.

Acts 2 gives us the playbook.

ACTS 2:42-47 (NKJV)

*⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' **doctrine** and **fellowship**, in the **breaking of bread**, and in **prayers**. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, **as anyone had need**. ⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ **praising God** and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those **who were being saved**.*

- Doctrine
- Fellowship
- Communion
- Prayer
- Generosity
- Worship
- Evangelism

Stir up love and good works (Hebrews 10:24)

Reach the Lost (Matthew 28:19)

Connect the Found (Acts 2:42)

Equip the Saints (Ephesians 4:12)

Serve the Hurting (James 1:27)

Send the called (Acts 1:8)

The job of a believer attending the gathering is to be pliable and teachable. Provide the soil by which the gospel seeds will grow. In doing this, the promise gets created and giants fall.

We're not attacking the giants by creating an atmosphere that acknowledged the giants and turns us into grasshoppers. We grow an atmosphere where giants are forced to leave because there are more "business" opportunities for them.

ACTS 19:17-20 (NIV)

¹⁷ When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. ¹⁸ Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done. ¹⁹ A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. ²⁰ In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

THE BLUE PRINT:

- They encountered Jesus (not religion, charisma, hype)
- Confessed their practices (there is a call from Sin)
- Removed what connected them to their old lives (repentance)
- The word of God grew and prevailed (this is where Giants die)