

## re·al·is·tic



**re·al·is·tic: 1. Tending to or expressing an awareness of things as they really are.**

VS.



With over a year of desert living behind them, the Israelites must have been relieved to hear that God had commanded Moses, "Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites." Finally! The wonderful land they had been anticipating was about to be theirs. When the spies returned, they told how wonderful the land was, but then they added--Let us tell you how it REALLY is: "We can't attack those people; *they are stronger than we are...*all the people we saw there are of *great size...*We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them." (Numbers 13:31-33)

Their enemy was the only one who gained from their analysis:

"The task is too BIG, we are too small, God is nowhere to be seen, and **realistically**, this is going to be a Failure!"

But although their appraisal was based on what they could see, they were not expressing things as they really were. Joshua and Caleb were the ones being realistic when they affirmed that GOD was part of the equation: "Do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. *Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us.* Do not be afraid of them." (Num. 14:9)

In today's Lent reading from I Corinthians 1:18-31, Paul states very realistically, "Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth." He was honestly stating that these "grasshoppers"--with no possessions, no position, and no pedigree--were the ones being sent to share Jesus with the philosophers and scholars of their day. But Paul's **realistic** account includes the same truth that Joshua and Caleb saw--God was part of the equation: "BUT God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong."

If our focus is only on ourselves, our abilities, and our resources, how can we end up with anything other than discouragement and fear against an Enemy that is stronger and more clever and has many resources? But when our focus is on Who God is, What He is doing, and How He is working in the most unlikely ways, it is only then that we are being truly re-al-is-tic.