



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

Session 4: Rebellion and Judgment

Suggested Week of Use: September 28, 2025

Core Passage: Numbers 14:11-24

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### News Story Summary

Earlier this month, during the opening weekend of the National Football League season, the San Francisco 49ers defeated the Seattle Seahawks 17-13 at Lumen Field in Seattle. The Seahawks twice reached the red zone (inside the opponents' 20-yard line) in crucial moments of the game. With less than four minutes to go in regulation, they chose a safe field goal instead of going for a touchdown. This score gave Seattle a 13-10 lead at the time. Later, after San Francisco scored a late touchdown to go ahead, Seattle again drove inside the 49ers' 10-yard line before a fumble with 42 seconds left ended their chances. Analysts noted that if the Seahawks had chosen to go for a touchdown earlier (and succeeded), the late score by San Francisco only would have tied the game. The safe choice looked smart in the moment, but it may have cost Seattle the win in the end.

For more about this story, search “Analysis Seahawks 49ers September 14”

### Engage

To supplement the Engage activity, write the following on the board or a large sheet of paper: “Playing not to lose.” Allow adults to suggest what that saying means to them. Affirm that it generally relates to being very cautious instead of taking chances. Share the story about the Seattle Seahawks’ safe choice against the San Francisco 49ers in a recent game. Say: *At one point in the game, it looked like the Seahawks had San Francisco on the ropes. But instead of taking a chance and going for a touchdown, they played it safe, settling for a short field goal. Then, on their final drive, they fumbled, wasting another trip into the red zone.*

Lead the group to think of other times when a team, company, or individual played it safe and missed an opportunity. Suggest that Christians often are guilty of “playing it safe” because of fear. Ask: *Why do you think fear of failure keeps us from bold obedience or risky faith? When have you played it safe, only to regret it later?* Explain that in today’s session, we find Israel camped at the edge of the promised land. Point out that while God had promised victory, the fear of giants made them play it safe—a decision that cost them dearly.

### Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activity, remind the group of the Seahawks’ choice to settle for a field goal instead of going for a touchdown. Say: *It’s easy to shake our heads at a football team’s missed opportunity; but, if we’re honest, we often do the same thing. We play it safe when God is calling us to bold obedience.* Challenge adults to take the following steps to overcome their fear of failure and the regrets that come with it:

1. Name your giants: Identify one area of life where fear is keeping you from bold faith—a conversation, a decision, a spiritual risk you know God wants you to take.
2. Trade fear for trust: When you sense internal hesitation, pause and ask: *What has God already promised me in this situation?* Write that promise down and pray over it.
3. Take one bold step: Encourage each person to do one thing this week they've been avoiding because of fear. (*Examples: sharing their faith, serving in a new way, making a hard choice, and so forth*) Next week, invite them to share what happened.