

Lent 2010
Biblical Courage in a Frightening World!
David Vs. Goliath Courage is facing the impossible.

1Sam. 17:37 And David said, “The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

We live in a frightening world where many bad things happen to good people on a daily basis.

- Who expected a PhD college professor to gun down three of her colleagues in Huntsville Alabama?
- How do we explain the fact that children go missing in America every day, some to never be seen or heard from again?
- There is a lot of chaos and evil in life.
- It is right at this point that we need to make choices: Either we become the coward or we become like the shepherd boy David.
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Don't develop a cowardly complex just like this guy in the video:
(PLAY VIDEO).

Courage is not a result of wishing you had more of it.

Courage is the ability to face the impossible and stand firm.

- The Bible teaches that this kind of courage is a result of knowing and trusting the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The more we know him, the more we know where we are going, the more we know why we are here, our purpose,
- THEN we can face the impossibilities of life, the giants, the fears and go on the offensive rather than the defensive.

The shepherd boy David is our prime example of having courage in the face of impossible odds.

Here is what David said to King Saul as he prepared to go out and meet the giant Goliath.

“The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

Let us watch a great visualization of that courageous battle between a scrawny teenager with faith against a giant who depended on himself.

RUN VIDEO

Think about it:

- The world wants self-reliance and aggressiveness, but God the Father honors humility and patience.
- The world is impressed with ambition, while the Lord's Word elevates a servant heart.
- The world is impressed with those who get; the Word is impressed with those who give what they get away.

So the marks of success that characterize the world's man or woman and Jesus' man or woman are not only NOT the same...in most cases, they are 180 degrees the one from the other.

There is at least one exception.

It is that quality called courage.

In fact, one of the greatest exclamations secular history places by the names of men and women whose lives are etched in its Hall of Fame is the seal of valor. . .the badge of courage.

History's heroes are, for the most part, men and women, who when faced with incredible odds, even the threat of death actually increased in boldness; and their courage became the hallmark of their life.

In like manner, the pages of biblical biographies, the lives of Lord's Living Legends, tend to surface when viewed under the lens of true spirituality.

What does that lens reveal?

A supernatural quality called courage as the evidence of Lord's seal of greatness. (Magnifying glass)

Courage Defined

The dictionary says this: "courage = the quality of being brave; valor."

Courage= "The state of quality of mind or spirit that enables one to face danger with self possession, confidence, and resolution

"Courage suggests a reserve of moral or spiritual strength on which one may draw in time of emergency."

Courage, then is an inner strength that seems to emerge when in the face of danger or seemingly impossible circumstances.

Let's be clear:

- Biblical courage is not a lack of fear! It is facing that fear.
- Biblical courage is not the result of self-reliance or self-confidence, it is reliance on Jesus and confidence that he can do what he calls us to do.
- Biblical courage is surrendering to Jesus' sovereignty, our trust in his strength, not in our own.

What did we just witness in this visualization of David facing Goliath?

We saw all the ingredients of the impossible.

- David lacked the world's definition of strength: No one placed any confidence in a teenage shepherd.
- David had a virtually impossible challenge. Facing a giant who had many kills to his name and terrified anyone who saw him.
- But David also had present the only valid source of strength. He trusted the Lord in his heart while facing a very visual giant who wants to smash him like a pumpkin.

What was the basis of David's strength and willingness to face the giant Goliath?

David's courage was the presence of the Lord in his life, the promise of Yahweh in his heart, and the power of the Lord on his behalf. With that in place, God the Father moved in David's heart.

37 And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

OK pastor, that's a great story about David but he's not facing my problems.

SO...what impossible problems are many of you facing where you could use the courage of David?

- Maybe you've lost your job and there seems to be no hope for the future.
- Perhaps your spouse is indifferent and no matter how much you communicate you're not getting anywhere.
- Your health is not the best and the doctor has told you to change your lifestyle.
- You did everything you knew to do but your children are distant and hard to talk to.
- We could go on and on!

The question we must all face on this Ash Wednesday is this:

Will we face these problems with the courage of Jesus Christ or permit these problems to overwhelm us and defeat us?

How do we get the Lord's courage for the impossible giants in our life?

To be courageous is a choice. It is a choice of the will. Remember, Jesus only orders us to do what he empowers us to do.

- When we are faced with fear and the impossible where do we turn?
- Our own wisdom and abilities? King Saul had a great army but no one was willing to face Goliath!
- Our savings account? All the wealth of Israel could not raise up anyone to face Goliath.
- The real place to turn is where David turned—the Lord. It is not written in the Bible but
- I can imagine what David did: He cried out to the Lord, “Lord what can I do in the face of this giant. Response he heard in his heart “You go, I will be with you?”

Is the Lord telling you to go face your giants? Have you consulted the Lord? This is the place to begin.

To be courageous is to change your perspective.

If you only see these problems of life as overwhelming and impossible that is precisely what they will be.

Remember when Moses sent the twelve spies into the promised land? The Ten returned and said:
“Their giants, we can't defeat them”

Joshua and Caleb came back and said, “Yes they're so big we can't miss them!”

Where you focus, there will be your courage or lack of courage.

If you only see your problems you will never have the courage to defeat them.

If you keep your eyes on Jesus and trust that he goes with you then you will not only have the courage but the power to defeat whatever you face.

How do you keep your eyes on Jesus?

1. Memorize scripture. At least two or three verses on trust, faith, hope.

Psalm 46:1-3 — God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

I Peter 5:7 — Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Matthew 11:28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

2. Talk to Jesus about your giants day and night always ending with one of these verses.

Ex: Jesus I'm overwhelmed and don't know what to do. But you do! Show me what to do. Guide me, grant me your help. I trust that you are my refuge and strength a very present help in trouble.

3. Sing praise to his name. Learn four or five songs of praise and sing them outloud and under your breath all day long.

The song we used for the offertory is one I sing often:

He is Lord, he is Lord, he is risen from the dead and he is Lord, every knee shall bow every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

To be courageous, you must be aware that Jesus is the one who is responsible for the outcome.

Josh. 23:3 And you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations for your sake, for it is the LORD your God who has fought for you.

I Samuel 17:26 For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

While it is true that you and I are often called to do something to engage the problems we face it is also true that unless the Lord does the fighting, brings the miracle, changes the heart, nothing of lasting consequence is going to happen.

Therefore when I face overwhelming problems I have learned to say,

“Lord Jesus, the outcome depends on you. Tell me what to do. Open whatever doors you will. Give me the ability face the impossible.”

Conclusion: In a few moments we are going to receive communion and for those who desire the mark of the cross of Jesus in ashes.

I am going to ask you right now this simple question: “Will you come to this communion rail and hand over to Jesus, as an act of your will, the giants you are facing today?” If you will raise you hand.

Let us pray!

Amen.