

# The Victorious Son of David

David & Saul Pt.7: David & Goliath pt.5

1 Samuel 17:51-58

Summary: Self-trusters rely on merit for salvation, question God, fail to seek Him as their help, look to earthly securities and comforts, use past righteousness as a license for sin, assume they will never fall, develop a self-centric world, and lack courage & lose heart. God-trusters inspire others and frighten Satan away. David's victories picture Christ's. Jesus' victory over evil will be decisive and complete. All suffering, pain, death, and evil will be eradicated, and we will dance for joy like the women in chapter 18.

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**50 So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. 51 David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. 52 Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath and to the gates of Ekron. Their dead were strewn along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron. 53 When the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines, they plundered their camp. 54 David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, and he put the Philistine's weapons in his own tent. 55 As Saul watched David going out to meet the Philistine, he said to Abner, commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is that young man?" Abner replied, "As surely as you live, O king, I don't know." 56 The king said, "Find out whose son this young man is." 57 As soon as David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with David still holding the Philistine's head. 58 "Whose son are you, young man?" Saul asked him. David said, "I am the son of your**

servant Jesse of Bethlehem." ...18:6 When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes. 7 As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands."

## Self-reliance vs. God-Reliance

### Review: Desire power because of love

We have been studying the account of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17, and last week we examined the connection between empowerment from God and human effort. We found that God exerts His power in our lives not instead of human effort, but through human effort. And so His grace in us is not without effect, it causes us to work hard. And when we work hard while relying on Him and not upon our own strength, we are enabled to realize great success, but the source of that success is not us but God.

We also found that we are commanded by God to desire and seek after greater power and strength in our lives. You should want to be strong and powerful. You should want that – not out of pride (so that people will be impressed with your strength), but out of love. If we love people we will want God's strength to work powerfully within us, because God's power brings about good for people. And if we love God that will be another reason we will desire power from Him, because the more you love Him the more you desire to experience His attributes and His grace flowing through you. If God says, "I have a delightful gift for you" and we say, "I am not really interested in that" we dishonor God and show Him to be undesirable and unable to generate worthwhile gifts.

So if you want power you seek grace from God. And you act as though God's promises are absolute guarantees. When you are acting on a promise of God use earnest effort (David ran); use wisdom (David picked the best weapons); use skill (in verse 39 it says the reason David used the sling is because he was used to the sling – literally, "he had proven" the sling. He had practiced and was good at slinging.); use backup (David took five stones, not one. And he brought his staff – just in case.); use your gifts mostly (David didn't try to be Saul. Do not try to be someone else. Just be you. God gave you the gift mix He gave you for a reason.)

When you are acting on a promise of God use earnest effort, wisdom, skill, backup, gifts - but do not rely on any of those to be the source of success.

### The importance of relying

I have showed you some passages that show that relying on your own strength is a very serious sin. But I still feel like I did not do a good enough job showing you how important this really is to God. Let me show you one more passage to underscore how God really feels about this.

**2 Cor.1:8-9 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. <sup>9</sup> Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death.**

Why? Paul is a godly man. And God is powerful enough that He could have easily delivered Paul from this horrible trial. I doubt there are very many people who have ever lived who were tougher or more courageous than Paul. So for Paul to get to this point you know it must have been something really extreme. Why would God put His beloved, faithful servant Paul through that?

**9 ... this happened that we might not rely...**

The whole thing was just to teach Paul something about relying and not relying.

**9 ... this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.**

It is more painful for God to watch you suffer than it is for you to watch your children suffer. And yet, He is willing to do it – willing to push you right to the brink of total despair and death, if that is what it takes to teach you to rely on Him.

## **Portrait of a self-truster**

***Thinking our religious actions or law-keeping gives us merit before God or makes us deserve to go to heaven***

Perhaps I have left this idea of relying on God vs. relying on self in too much of an abstract, theoretical realm, without making it clear what it looks like in day to day life. Therefore I have searched the Scriptures to see how the Bible describes self-trusters and God-trusters. And I found that self-reliance springs up in our lives in a wide variety of ways. The worst and most deadly kind of trust in yourself is trusting in your own religious activity or pedigree or merit to save you.

**Php.3:3-9 it is we who ... put no confidence in the flesh-- <sup>4</sup> though I myself have reasons for such confidence. ...<sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. <sup>7</sup> But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ...<sup>8</sup> ... I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.**

This is where we have to depart from our Roman Catholic friends, since Catholicism teaches that you are saved by a righteousness that is your own and that is earned through religious activity. A person who has that approach will not go to heaven now matter how good he is at religion. He is committing eternal suicide, because it is impossible to be righteous enough to save yourself with your own righteousness. (See Romans 4)

One way you know when you're guilty of this is when your righteousness is an occasion to look down on others.

**Lk.18:9-14 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and looked down on everyone else: <sup>10</sup> "Two men went up to the temple complex to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee took his stand and was praying like this: 'God, I thank You that I'm not like other people<sup>2</sup>-- greedy, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week; I give a tenth<sup>1</sup> of everything I get.' <sup>13</sup> "But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even raise his eyes to heaven but kept striking his chest and saying, 'God, turn Your wrath from me-- a sinner!' <sup>14</sup> I tell you, this one went down to his house justified rather than the other; because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."**

So that is the most basic and egregious kind of self-reliance. But there are also a lot of ways you and I as true Christians tend to fall into trusting ourselves.

## ***Questioning God (relying on your own wisdom)***

For example: – questioning God. When a person demands answers from God about suffering, or he complains and grumbles (which implies that God is not doing a good job running this universe), that person is questioning God's wisdom. He is measuring God's wisdom against his own wisdom (which is where his

trust is), and finding God's wisdom to fall short. Job did that, and here is what God said to him - God gave Job a little homework assignment:

**Job 40:10-14 Adorn yourself with majesty and splendor, and clothe yourself with honor and glory. <sup>11</sup> Unleash your raging anger; look on every proud person and humiliate him. <sup>12</sup> Look on every proud person and humble him; ... imprison them in the grave. <sup>14</sup> Then I will confess to you that your own right hand can deliver you.**

Any time you question God's wisdom or actions you are trusting in your own wisdom more than God's. The same goes for anytime you elevate human wisdom over God's Word. When Scripture says, "Here is the solution to problems like anger, or depression, or addiction," and we say, "No, we would rather apply human wisdom" and we turn to psychological theories that oppose Scripture; or when Scripture tells us that God made the world in six days, and it was very good, and there was no death until after Adam sinned, and we say, "We trust what the world tells us. They are sure the world is billions of years old and every fossil is proof of death before Adam, and so we believe that. When the Bible says we are to follow the church discipline process when people sin, but we think we have a better idea of how to handle it. When God says, "Preach the Word!" and we say, "No, that's outdated. Video clips work a lot better these days." Every time we prefer human wisdom to God's Word we are trusting in ourselves.

### ***Failing to seek God as the source of our help***

Another way believers can be guilty of self-trust is when we fail to seek God as the source of our help.

**Jer.17:5 This is what the LORD says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength ... <sup>6</sup> He will be like a bush in the wastelands ... <sup>7</sup> "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him.**

You fall into thinking the only way your life can be full of joy is if some person changes. The key to your joy is held in the hands of some human being.

Or the other side of the same coin – maybe you are already happy, but you have an attitude that thinks the reason you are happy is because of your wife or husband or job or circumstances. And if that ever changes then you could not be happy. That is unfaithfulness to God. Very often it masquerades as gratitude to God. "God I am so thankful that you have given me this husband or this wonderful house or job," but in reality deep down you think that if you lost that gift from God you could not have joy. And so you live in slavery – living your life in such a way as to make sure you don't ever lose that source of your joy.

The pattern of the God-trusting soul is, whenever there is a need for strength, to seek hard after enablement from the Holy Spirit. Remember - all the power and blessing and success that David enjoyed is shown very clearly by the writer as flowing out of his anointing, when the Holy Spirit came to him.<sup>1</sup> Spurgeon was right: "You can't do David's work if you have not David's anointing."<sup>2</sup> The Apostles were told to wait for the Spirit to come in Jerusalem before they did anything. Even Jesus waited for the Spirit to come upon Him before He began His public ministry. Every believer has the Holy Spirit, but there are ever-greater experiences of enablement by the Spirit that are possible for each of us. That is why Paul, writing to believers in Ephesians, said:

**Eph.1:17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better**

**Lk.11:13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!**

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<sup>1</sup> The same thing happened when the Holy Spirit came to Saul in the beginning of the book. And Saul's power and success dissolved when the Holy Spirit left him.

<sup>2</sup> Sermon on 1 Samuel 17.

As His beloved children God wants us to ask Him for the Holy Spirit. Self-trust seeks strength from this earth mainly rather than from heaven.

### ***Looking to earthly securities for comfort***

And it seeks not just strength, but also security and comfort. Self-trust counts on earthly things for those as well.

**Job 31:24-28 If I have put my trust in gold or said to pure gold, 'You are my security,'<sup>25</sup> if I have rejoiced over my great wealth, the fortune my hands had gained, ...<sup>28</sup> then these also would be sins to be judged, for I would have been unfaithful to God on high.<sup>3</sup>**

When you are looking at the bright side of some calamity, and you get to the part where you say, “Well at least...” - what follows that? If you lose a bunch of money and say, “Well at least I’ve got some savings,” or “at least I have a good job;” or are you like Paul, who said, “At least I serve a God who can raise the dead.”

One of the most important diagnostic questions you can ask to assess the health of your spiritual life is this - when you have a really, really hard day, where do you run? What does the practice of your life point to as your source of comfort and joy and safety and strength and refuge? Is the pattern of your life to run to God and to expect and anticipate comfort and joy and safety and strength and refuge coming from Him? Or do you run to a cup of coffee, or the TV, or another person, or your bed, or your music, or a good book, or your hobby, or food, or a glass of wine, or solitude, or companionship, or a video game, or the Internet? Enjoying God’s comfort through those things is fine, but thinking of those things as the source of the comfort is idolatry. It is a trust in the creation rather than the Creator.

### ***Using past righteousness as a license for sin***

Another way people trust in themselves is by counting on their past righteousness.

**Ez.33:13 If I tell the righteous man that he will surely live, but then he trusts in his righteousness and does evil, none of the righteous things he has done will be remembered; he will die for the evil he has done.**

If you ever find yourself relying on your past – if the proof of the genuineness of your salvation is all in the past; or if you feel like you have been doing so well up to now that you have earned the right to indulge some sin – you are relying on your own righteousness.

### ***Assuming we can never fall***

Another kind of self-trust is when you think you are so strong you can never fall. There are a lot of Christians who have an attitude that says, “I may fall into some small mess-ups here and there, but I will never have any big fall. There is no way I could ever commit murder or embezzlement, or armed robbery or something that would send me to prison. I know I will never commit adultery or publicly deny Christ.” That is sheer pride. “Satan may have been able to get the best of guys like David and Peter and Moses and Jeremiah, but he could never have any significant victory over me. If God allowed Satan to try to sift me as wheat I would flatten him. No way will I ever fall.”

**Jer.49:4 Why do you brag ... you faithless daughter? You who trust in your treasures and boast: Who can attack me?**

**1 Cor.10:12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!**

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<sup>3</sup> See also Ps.49:5-13.

The context of that warning is Paul's explanation of why he was so concerned about the possibility of himself being disqualified (lit. "rejected").

When God is favoring you it is so easy to assume that will never change. You feel invincible. And you can fall into thinking it is because of your godliness and faithfulness and strength and wisdom that things are going so well.

**Ps.30:6-7 When I felt secure, I said, "I will never be shaken." <sup>7</sup> O LORD, when you favored me, you made my mountain stand firm; but when you hid your face, I was dismayed.**

### ***Developing a self-centric world***

Another time when we fall into self-trust is when we develop a self-centric world. It is not that we think wrong things about God - we just don't think about God at all. He just sort of evaporates from our thinking as soon as we walk out of our prayer closet in the morning, and we live all day as though the central figure in your life is you.

**Isa.47:8-11 "Now then, listen, you wanton creature, lounging in your security and saying to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me. I will never be a widow or suffer the loss of children.' ... <sup>10</sup> You ... have said, 'No one sees me.' Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you when you say to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me.' <sup>11</sup> Disaster will come upon you**

A world that revolves around you and not God is a world of self-trust.

### ***Lacking courage or losing heart***

One more: – how about when we lack courage or lose heart, or hesitate to obey God because of obstacles or criticism?

**32 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine**

They lost heart because they were trusting in their own resources, and those resources clearly were not enough.

**Isa.12:2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD, is my strength**

When the Lord is your strength you are not afraid, which means when you are afraid you are not trusting the Lord as your strength. When you trust in yourself fear will paralyze you, and you will respond like Moses. God gave him a clear command to go to Pharaoh, and Moses argued. "The thing You don't understand, God, is that I am just not very good at delivering a nation of captives out of the hand of the world's most powerful military force. That is just not my forte, so I am going to pass on this one." The reason Moses' response made God so angry was because it showed that he was relying on his own strength and not God's. David rejected Saul's armor because it was not suited to him, but he did not reject the task of giant-killing. Do you lose courage easily? That is a sign of self-trust.

### **Portrait of the God-Truster**

So you can see there are some very real, very practical ways self-reliance can manifest itself in our lives. And there are also some very real, practical ways God-reliance can manifest itself in our lives.

### ***Contagious courage***

For one thing, it will encourage and strengthen God's people.

## **51 When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran.**

They reneged on the arrangement where the losing side would agree to be subject to the winning side. Treaties worked out with dishonest leaders were just as worthless then as they are in our day. It is interesting that the Philistines are so terrified and the Israelites are so confident all of the sudden. Both sides still have the same military strength as they had before. The only thing that has changed is a courage shift. You see great faith is contagious. Sometimes if one person acts on faith it can fill all of God's people with courage.

### ***Frightening fighting***

And at the same time it deflates the courage of the enemy. In fact, the defeat of the Philistine army seems to be attributed more to Philistine fear than to Israelite courage. First they start running, then Israel starts chasing. The wicked flee in fear from the woman or man of faith. Now, let me ask you this – does that apply even to Satan? Is Satan ever afraid?

## **Jas.4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**

The word “resist” means “to fight against.” And the word translated “flee” is used 29 times in the NT. Each time, with only one possible exception, the word describes an attempt to escape danger. The normal use of the word “flee” is to describe fleeing to escape danger.

Have you ever wondered why Satan flees when we fight against him? It is not just that he gives up once he sees it is a lost cause. Fleeing is more than giving up; it is running for your life. The implication seems to be that Satan runs out of fear that he will be harmed. If the devil is tempting me or tormenting me in some way, and I fight against him, what harm or pain can I inflict upon him? - None that I know of. So what is happening? It must be that God scares him away. Satan is able to see the power of God in the man of faith, and it scares him. In the unseen spiritual world God works through our faith-filled resistance in such a way that actually threatens the devil's safety, and makes him run. My mother described it as being like a little boy standing up to a bully with his arms folded saying, “Just try to punch me,” and behind the little boy is standing his father. And the bully runs in fear of the father.

For many of us, if we are honest, we have to admit that that verse does not seem to be true. It does not really seem like Satan flees when we fight against him. It seems like he just keeps pounding away at us. But if the Bible promises Satan will flee when we fight against him we can be assured it is true. - Which means if Satan is not fleeing from me, I must not be fighting against him. If he is still trying to attack me and deceive me and tempt me and discourage me, then evidently I need to step up my attack on him. I need to do what Romans 12:21 says and overcome evil with good. I need to take the nuclear weapons at my disposal – the weapons of good (things like humility and honesty and servanthood and love and forgiveness and patience and wisdom and faith and truth and obedience and integrity) - weapons that deliver megatons of divine power that can demolish strongholds, and just unload on him. Overcoming evil with good means when someone you love hurts you with evil, you defeat what they are doing using good. You unload on them with forgiveness and patience and kindness and servanthood and humility, and demolish the evil that is coming out of their heart. And if we do that God promises us that the enemy will run for his life.

## **The victorious Son of David!**

When we first began this study of the life of David we found that Scripture makes two things very clear about this material. One reason why we are given so much detail about the life of David – much more than anyone else in the Bible, is because his life stands as a model of godliness for us to follow. The Bible is very clear about that in numerous places. Jesus is an example of perfect righteousness for us, and David is an example of what it looks like to be a man after God's own heart, and to also be a sinner. And so we have spent a lot of time these weeks learning from David's example of love for God in 1 Samuel 17.

## **Jesse the Ephrethite (point to messianic significance)**

But that is not the only purpose of the record of David's life. There is another great purpose. I have mentioned before that the commentators are often puzzled about the material in this chapter about Jesse. Why the big emphasis in this chapter on who Jesse was?<sup>4</sup> He is mentioned a half dozen times in this one chapter. He is clearly one of the main characters of the story, and he is not even there! Why such a focus on who Jesse is?

I would like to suggest that maybe the focus is not on who Jesse was. Perhaps the point is to show who he wasn't. The writer wants to make it clear that Jesse was not royalty. The selection of David as king had nothing to do with David's birth. He was last born of eight, and his father was a nobody from a tiny town, and even though they had once had some communication Saul does not even remember him.

Most of the commentators speak as though whoever wrote chapter 17 did not know about chapter 16, and that is why Jesse is reintroduced. But there is an indication to the contrary in the Hebrew in verse 12. At first verse 12 does sound like a new introduction.

### **12 Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah**

But in the Hebrew it does not say, "an Ephrathite," it says "*this* Ephrathite." And the word "this" is in an emphatic position. Using that word is like saying, "You know, the Ephrathite I was just talking about." The "this" refers us back to the mention of Jesse in chapter 16 where we first learn he is an Ephrathite. So the real question is, why is it so important to identify Jesse as the Ephrathite? The answer to that lies in some passages earlier in God's Word that pointed to Ephrathah in connection to the messianic line. The book of Ruth is the story of David's great grandmother. She was a Moabitess who traveled with Naomi the Ephrathite back to Bethlehem where she ends up marrying Boaz and giving birth to Obed, the father of Jesse.

**Ruth 1:2 The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah.**

1 Chronicles 4 lists the descendants of Judah, which is the tribe from which the great, messianic King would someday come.

**1 Chrn.4:4 The descendants of Judah: Perez, Hezron... 4 These were the descendants of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah and father of Bethlehem.**

**Mic.5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.**

The focus on Jesse the Ephrathite in 1 Samuel 17, I am convinced, is a messianic glimmer in this chapter. It is a reminder of where this story fits in to the grand picture of redemptive history.

## **Jesus as representative victor**

David's victory, not only over Goliath, but all David's victories, are pictures of the victory the greater Son of David would someday enjoy over evil. This is a major theme in Scripture. All through Jeremiah and Ezekiel you see promises about when David's great Son comes, He will have total victory over all evil. God's people will be totally safe at that time. Enemies will be defeated, wild animals will not longer be a threat – all evil will be subdued. (See especially Jer.23:5,6, Jer.30:8-11, Ez.34:22-25) And we see the same

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<sup>4</sup> The reason Saul asks at the end of the chapter was no doubt because of his promise to make the man who defeated Goliath his son-in-law. David had been in Saul's court in the past, but only on an occasional basis. And even if Saul remembered David, it's doubtful that he would know all the names of all the fathers of everyone who ever served in his courts. Saul wanted to know who David's father was, probably because he was considering bringing David into his courts on a permanent basis, and he wanted to know what kind of family he was dealing with.



thing in the New Testament. In Acts 2:34-36 Peter makes the point about how the promise of total victory made to David is fulfilled only in Jesus.

**Acts 2:34-36 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand <sup>35</sup> until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" <sup>36</sup> "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."**

And then when we get to the very end of the Bible where all evil is completely eradicated by Jesus Christ, and of all His many glorious titles the ones He focuses on there is "the Root of David."

**Rev.5:5 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed.**

**Rev.22:12-16 <sup>12</sup> "Behold, I am coming soon! ... <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.**

Then in verses 14 and 15 he describes the final judgment, where all the righteous will be rewarded, and all the wicked will be finally judged, and then...

**<sup>16</sup> "I, Jesus ... am the Root and the Offspring of David**

So let's close our study of this chapter rejoicing over how David's victory over Goliath foreshadows Jesus' final victory over evil. David went out as Israel's representative and single-handedly defeated the enemy. He did not lead them in battle to defeat the enemy – He defeated the enemy instead of them doing it. Jesus went out as our representative, in our place and single-handedly dealt the death-blow to Satan and death on our behalf. The ultimate Goliath is a giant that none of us can defeat. And we rejoice in our Champion who defeats him for us.

### **Decisive victory**

There is a lot in this account about Goliath's head. If we skip ahead to the last verse in the chapter, Abner has brought David before Saul, and they are having a conversation about who David's father is.

**58 "Whose son are you, young man?" Saul asked him. David said, "I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem."**

But look back at the end of verse 57. The whole time they are having this conversation David is still carrying around that head! That had to be kind of weird for Saul.

Imagine trying to have a conversation with someone and the whole time Goliath's gigantic head is staring up at you. David later took that head to Jerusalem (v.54). That is interesting, because Israel did not control Jerusalem at this time. The Jebusites had it. Evidently David is already putting the surrounding nations on notice that they are next if they oppose the armies of the living God.

The fact that David cut off Goliath's head points to the decisiveness of the victory. So does the fact that he used Goliath's own sword.<sup>5</sup> That is the most decisive kind of defeat. Haman was hanged on his own gallows that was prepared for Mordecai. (Es.7:10) We see numerous times in the Psalms that God shows His complete power over the wicked by using their own weapons to punish them. (Ps.141:8-10, 7:15-16, 35:8, 37:14, Pr.11:8). And it is with that kind of decisive, absolute superiority that Jesus Christ will defeat His foes. He will cut the head off of evil.

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<sup>5</sup> Later on this sword ends up at the Tabernacle in Nob. The commentators assume that David must have dedicated it to the Lord. The problem with that is David asked the priest if he had a sword or a spear. Surely David would have remembered if he was the one who put it there. We don't know how it ended up there. But evidently David lost track of it at some point. We would probably do well to have that kind of attitude toward our trophies.

## **The evil in this world (news)**

I don't follow the news much these days, but a few weeks ago I pulled up a news web page to see what the headlines were that day. \* One of them was about a celebrity that was getting an award, and went out of her way in her acceptance speech to blaspheme Jesus Christ. We live in a culture where people who publicly mock Jesus Christ are given awards and paid millions of dollars. \* Another one was about a five-year-old hanged by her mother. \* Another one was about a man who brutally kicked his toddler repeatedly because she would not go to sleep. Then the mother just left her to die, and then cut her into pieces. This was all just from a glance at one Day's headlines.

### ***Slavery***

I also read recently about the slave trade in Mexico. Young women kidnapped, then taken to a place where they are repeatedly raped, and brutally beaten until their spirit is broken so they are easier to control and transport. Then the rest of their lives is just day after day, year after year of horrific suffering without any hope of relief – ever.

### ***Disease***

And then you think about all the suffering from diseases. Some of the diseases in this world are horrible beyond words. We have viruses that adapt themselves and morph themselves to inflict maximum harm in ways that modern science can do nothing to stop.

A friend of mine was fighting for custody of his kids because his wife had turned away from the faith to live a wicked lifestyle. And she had custody and was teaching the kids that God is a myth. In the midst of all that he drove off the road one day, went to the hospital, and was told there was a grapefruit sized tumor in his brain. A short time later he was dead and she had the kids.

### ***Pain***

It is impossible for me to even summarize how much pain is being experienced right at this very moment around the world. Every person who has ever lived is the product of a birth process that is one of the most painful ordeals there is. Probably most everyone in this room has experienced pain from a broken relationship that has been so agonizing that you didn't know how you would make it through another day. There is at least one person in this church who could tell you what it is like as a young child to be brutally beaten and sexually abused every day for years.

What do you do when the evening news, or your own personal experience forces you to face the overwhelming enormity of evil? What do you do in those times when the sheer magnitude of it, and overwhelming power of it, and utter wickedness of it is so unbearable you just want to cry? That day I looked at those news headlines and saw all those horrible things, one of the news stories was about a funeral for a sheik who was killed in Iraq. He was a man who was standing up against Al Quida. You know what it is like to live in a place where Al Quida has a foothold? Just to give you an idea – here is a common occurrence over there. You get an invitation from them to come to dinner. You show up for dinner and they are serving your son, whom they had killed and roasted. And you have to decide whether to fall in line with them or resist and end up like your son. That is going on right now over there, and this sheik was one who was standing up against that, and was fighting against it. So they killed him.

And as I read about that funeral it hit me – man is trying hard to do something to mitigate the expression of wickedness. We have police and armies and laws and all kinds of efforts to hold back some of the tidal wave of evil. And the funeral of that sheik was just a testimony to the utter inability of man to do anything ultimately about the problem of evil.

### **Jesus' victory**

But in Revelation 19 we read about when Jesus Christ will return someday like a rider on a white horse. And on His robe will be written "King of kings and Lord of lords." And He will bring justice and make war on evil. And the armies of heaven will be following Him all riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

**Rev.20:11-15** Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. **12** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. **13** The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. **14** Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

All evil, all pain, all suffering, all disease, all sorrow, all death, all evil – gone forever!  
Totally, finally, decisively, and eternally defeated!

## **The thrill of victory!**

**1 Sam.18:6** When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes.

For those 40 days it was not looking good at all. Those women knew if the Philistines were victorious it would be a life of being raped, used as slaves, tortured, seeing their children butchered – a life of horror. And for 40 days it seemed like that was the way it was headed. And then one day a runner comes back with the news – “David has defeated the Philistines! The soldiers are taking a long time to get back because it is such an ordeal to haul all the plunder back. Now you are not only safe and free, but rich!.” And they are singing and dancing in the streets.

If David’s victory is a picture of the final victory of Christ over evil, what is the joy of these women a picture of? It is a picture of the exuberant, inexpressible, uncontainable joy that all who have loved the Lord Jesus Christ will experience on that Day. Someday you and I are going to see the final defeat of evil with our own eyes and I don’t care if you are an emotional or non-emotional type, we will be so full of joy and happiness that we will be literally shouting for joy, and dancing in the streets, and saying, “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands, and Christ has destroyed all evil!”

**Rev.19:1-4** After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, <sup>2</sup> for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants." <sup>3</sup> And again they shouted: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever." <sup>4</sup> The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: "Amen, Hallelujah!"

**Benediction: 2 Peter 3:10-14** the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. <sup>11</sup> Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup> as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup> But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

## Devotionals

### David and Goliath (pt.5)

1 Samuel 17 Day 1

Self-reliance springs up in our lives in a wide variety of ways. The worst and most deadly kind of trust in yourself is trusting in your own religious activity or pedigree or merit to save you.

*Thinking our religious actions or law-keeping gives us merit before God or makes us deserve to go to heaven*

**Php.3:3-9** it is we who ... put no confidence in the flesh-- <sup>4</sup> though I myself have reasons for such confidence. ...<sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. <sup>7</sup> But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ...<sup>8</sup> ... I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

A person who has that approach will not go to heaven now matter how good he is at religion. He is committing eternal suicide, because it is impossible to be righteous enough to save yourself with your own righteousness. (See Ro.4)

One way you know when you're guilty of this is when your righteousness is an occasion to look down on others.

**Lk.18:9-14** He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and looked down on everyone else: <sup>10</sup> "Two men went up to the temple complex to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee took his stand and was praying like this: 'God, I thank You that I'm not like other people<sup>2</sup>-- greedy, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week; I give a tenth<sup>1</sup> of everything I get.' <sup>13</sup> "But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even raise his eyes to heaven but kept striking his chest and saying, 'God, turn Your wrath from me-- a sinner!' <sup>14</sup> I tell you, this one went down to his house justified rather than the other; because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

### *Questioning God (relying on your own wisdom)*

When a person demands answers from God about suffering, or he complains and grumbles (which implies that God is not doing a good job running this universe), that person is questioning God's wisdom. He is measuring God's wisdom against his own wisdom (which is where his trust is), and finding God's wisdom to fall short.

Job did that, and here's what God said to him - God gave Job a little homework assignment:

**Job 40:10-14** Adorn yourself with majesty and splendor, and clothe yourself with honor and glory. <sup>11</sup> Unleash your raging anger; look on every proud person and humiliate him. <sup>12</sup> Look on every proud

**person and humble him; ... imprison them in the grave. <sup>14</sup> Then I will confess to you that your own right hand can deliver you.**

Any time you question God's wisdom or actions you are trusting in your own wisdom more than God's. The same goes for anytime you elevate human wisdom over God's Word. When Scripture says, "Here is the solution to problems like anger, or depression, or addiction," and we say, "No, we would rather apply human wisdom" and we turn to psychological theories that oppose Scripture; or when Scripture tells us that God made the world in 6 days, and it was very good, and there was no death until after Adam sinned, and we say, "We trust what the world tells us. They are sure the world is billions of years old and every fossil is proof of death before Adam, and so we believe that. When the Bible says we are to follow the church discipline process when people sin, but we think we have a better idea of how to handle it. When God says, "Preach the Word!" and we say, "No, that's outdated. Video clips work a lot better these days." Every time we prefer human wisdom to God's Word we are trusting in ourselves.

### *Using past righteousness as a license for sin*

**Ez.33:13 If I tell the righteous man that he will surely live, but then he trusts in his righteousness and does evil, none of the righteous things he has done will be remembered; he will die for the evil he has done.**

If you ever find yourself relying on your past – if the proof of the genuineness of your salvation is all in the past; or if you feel like you have been doing so well up to now that you have earned the right to indulge some sin – you are relying on your own righteousness.

### *Assuming we can never fall*

Another kind of self-trust is when you think you are so strong you can never fall. There are a lot of Christians who have an attitude that says, "I may fall into some small mess-ups here and there, but I'll never have any big fall. There is no way I could ever commit murder or embezzlement, or armed robbery or something that would send me to prison. I know I will never commit adultery or publicly deny Christ." That is sheer pride.

**Jer.49:4 Why do you brag ... you faithless daughter? You who trust in your treasures and boast: Who can attack me?**

**1 Cor.10:12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!**

The context of that warning is Paul's explanation of why he was so concerned about the possibility of himself being disqualified (lit. "rejected"). When God is favoring you it's so easy to assume that will never change. You feel invincible. And you can fall into thinking it is because of your godliness and faithfulness and strength and wisdom that things are going so well.

**Ps.30:6-7 When I felt secure, I said, "I will never be shaken." <sup>7</sup> O LORD, when you favored me, you made my mountain stand firm; but when you hid your face, I was dismayed.**

*Holy Father, granter of repentance, giver of faith, and preserver of my life, forgive me for my self-reliance. I know You are the only source of my salvation, and yet how prone I am to think my daily perseverance is my own doing. If I am faithful for a time, how prone I am to fall into thinking I have done something for which I deserve credit, rather than having borrowed more grace that has placed me farther in debt to You. When I stand firm it seems I will never be shaken, and I so easily think it is due to my own strength. Teach me today, dear Lord, how dependent I am upon Your enabling, preserving grace just to arrive tonight in my bed with my faith still in tact. Protect me today, dear God. Preserve my faith. Keep me in Christ. And teach me how to enjoy being held and preserved by You today!*

**Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy:** The God who supplies all the grace for me to be saved, sanctified and kept.

**Promise to trust:** He will preserve my faith

**What will result if I experience this attribute today:** Joy, obedience, hope

## **David and Goliath (pt.5)**

1 Samuel 17 Day 2

### *Failing to seek God as the source of our help*

**Jer.17:5** This is what the LORD says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength ... <sup>6</sup> He will be like a bush in the wastelands ... <sup>7</sup> "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him.

When you fall into thinking the only way your life can be full of joy is if some person changes, you are trusting in man, not God. The key to your joy should never be held in the hands of some human being.

Or the other side of the same coin – maybe you are already happy, but you have an attitude that thinks the reason you are happy is because of your wife or husband or job or circumstances. And if that ever changes then you couldn't be happy. That is unfaithfulness to God. Very often it masquerades as gratitude to God. "God I'm so thankful that you've given me this husband or this wonderful house or job," but in reality deep down you think that if you lost that gift from God you could not have joy. And so you live in slavery – living your life in such a way as to make sure you don't ever lose that source of your joy.

*When I do this, dear Father, I sin not only against You, by acting as though there were some other source of joy, but against those I look to for my joy. When I look to my wife for my joy I sin against her by placing a responsibility on her shoulders that is not hers and that is not even possible for her to fulfill. Dear Lord, when I am distressed because of the way someone near me is behaving toward me, let that distress be a reminder to for me that my only source of joy is not behaving in a bad way toward me.*

### *Looking to earthly securities for comfort*

**Job 31:24-28** If I have put my trust in gold or said to pure gold, 'You are my security,' <sup>25</sup> if I have rejoiced over my great wealth, the fortune my hands had gained, ...<sup>28</sup> then these also would be sins to be judged, for I would have been unfaithful to God on high.<sup>6</sup>

When you are looking at the bright side of some calamity, and you get to the part where you say, "Well at least..." - what follows that? If you lose a bunch of money and say, "Well at least I've got some savings," or "at least I have a good job;" or are you like Paul, who said, "At least I serve a God who can raise the dead." One of the most important diagnostic questions you can ask to assess the health of your spiritual life is this - when you have a really, really hard day, where do you run? What does the practice of your life point to as your source of comfort and joy and safety and strength and refuge? Is the pattern of your life to run to God and to expect and anticipate comfort and joy and safety and strength and refuge coming from Him? Or do you run to a cup of coffee, or the TV, or another person, or your bed, or your music, or a good book, or your hobby, or food, or a glass of wine, or solitude, or companionship, or a video game, or the Internet? Enjoying God's comfort through those things is fine, but thinking of those things as the source of the comfort is idolatry. It is a trust in the creation rather than the Creator.

*Oh how hard this is dear God! Sometimes the line between enjoying You through Your gifts and enjoying the gifts instead of You is so fine (especially when I'm not consciously thinking it through); Father teach me how to be more aware of You as the source of joy behind all Your gifts.*

**Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy:** The God who is the source of all joy and satisfaction

**Promise to trust:** He will satisfy me if I seek joy from Him alone

**What will result if I experience this attribute today:** Joy and satisfaction, love for others, patience

## **David and Goliath (pt.5)**

1 Samuel 17 Day3

### *Developing a self-centric world*

Another time when we fall into self-trust is when we develop a self-centric world. It's not that we think wrong things about God - we just don't think about God at all. He just sort of evaporates from our thinking as soon as we walk out of our prayer closet in the morning, and we live all day as though the central figure in your life is you.

**Isa.47:8-11** "Now then, listen, you wanton creature, lounging in your security and saying to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me. I will never be a widow or suffer the loss of children.' ... <sup>10</sup> You ... have said, 'No one sees me.' Your wisdom and knowledge mislead you when you say to yourself, 'I am, and there is none besides me.' <sup>11</sup> Disaster will come upon you

*Oh how self-centered my world tends to be, dear God. I place myself at the center so quickly – even just moments after having spent time alone with You in prayer, thinking about Your total supremacy. Kill this tendency in me, dear Lord Jesus. Show me what it means to die to myself so that I can live in You. Let alarm bells go off in Your servant's heart whenever I begin acting as though everything revolves around me, and my desires are supreme.*

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<sup>6</sup> See also Ps.49:5-13.

## *Lacking courage or losing heart because of obstacles or criticism*

### **32 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine**

They lost heart because they were trusting in their own resources, and those resources clearly were not enough.

### **Isa.12:2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD, is my strength**

When the Lord is your strength you are not afraid, which means when you are afraid you are not trusting the Lord as your strength. When you trust in yourself fear will paralyze you, and you'll respond like Moses. God gave him a clear command to go to Pharaoh, and Moses argued. "The thing You don't understand, God, is that I'm just not very good at delivering a nation of captives out of the hand of the world's most powerful military force. That's just not my forte, so I'm going to pass on this one." The reason Moses' response made God so angry was because it showed that he was relying on his own strength and not God's. David rejected Saul's armor because it wasn't suited to him, but he didn't reject the task of giant-killing.

Do you lose courage easily? That's a sign of self-trust.

*So often my discouragement is just a pity-party. I face some obstacle, and instead of plowing through it with courage and strength, I sit and wallow in it like a pig in mud – waiting for someone to come along and feel sorry for me. When I do that, dear God, I'm simply revealing a heart that cares more about pity than about accomplishing Your great work.*

*Give Your servant love for You that will drive me to press through any obstacle no matter what the cost because of my zeal for Your work and Your calling on my life.*

**Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy:** The God who is the glorious center of all things, and whose calling is greater than any other thing.

**Promise to trust:** His calling on my life is greater than anything else I could pursue

**What will result if I experience this attribute today:** Meaningful life, joy, awe, fear, motivation

## **David and Goliath (pt.5)**

1 Samuel 17 Day 4

**1 Sam.17:50-52** So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. **51** David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine's sword and drew it from the scabbard. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword. **52** Then the men of Israel and Judah surged forward with a shout and pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath and to the gates of Ekron.

All the Israelite soldiers, including Saul, were paralyzed with fear before David arrived. When David killed Goliath the Philistine army was the same army, minus one man. They were still an extremely formidable foe – probably with significantly superior weapons and numbers. And yet, Israel suddenly they were afraid of Israel. The only thing that had really changed was a shift in confidence. It doesn't seem like the Israelites were suddenly especially brave (first the Philistines started running, then Israel surged forward – not the other way around). The defeat of the Philistine army seems to be attributed more to Philistine fear than to Israelite courage.

**James 4:7** Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.



The word “flee” is used 29 times in the NT. Each time, with one possible exception, the word is used to describe an attempt to escape danger.

Have you ever wondered why Satan flees? I have always taken this verse to mean Satan will just give up once he sees it’s a lost cause. But that’s not really the picture this word conveys. Fleeing is more than giving up. It’s running for your life. The implication seems to be that Satan runs out of fear that he will be harmed.

If the devil is tempting me or tormenting me in some way, and I resist (the word means “to fight against”) him, what harm or pain can I inflict upon him? None that I know of. There are probably two aspects to this:

- 1) It is like a little boy standing up to a bully with his arms folded saying, “Just try to punch me” and behind the little boy is standing his father. And the bully runs in fear of the father.
- 2) Satan does much of his work through people. And just as resisting God’s people = resisting God, so resisting Satan’s servants = resisting Satan. If you resist Satan (by resisting those who are serving him) then Satan (along with those who serve him) will flee in fear. Satan will flee out of fear of God, and his servants, when they see the display of divine power coming through your faith, will flee simply because they are afraid after having seen the display of power.

*Give Your servant the courage, dear Lord, to resist the evil one. And when I need to resist those people he is using, help me to have the insight to realize that it is Satan I am opposing and not flesh and blood. And when I fight against evil people, teach me how to overcome evil with good. My flesh wants to resort to the same sinful, fleshly tactics that they use – gossip, insults, silent treatment, etc. But those are the weapons of the world. Those are Goliath’s weapons. Teach me to use weapons that have divine power to demolish strongholds – with good. Teach me to overpower sinners by means of kindness and love and self-sacrifice and patience and humble service, and prayer, and godly affections, and trust in Your promises.*

*I believe, dear God, that if I do that, You will move with such awesome power that Satan’s servants will actually be afraid to oppose me, and Satan himself will even run in fear. Thank You, dear God! Help me to remember this when I need to remember it. Any time I am distressed because of sin in someone’s life, let this principle come to my mind, that I might diligently and earnestly seek how to defeat the evil with good.*

**Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy:** The God whose power scares the enemy

**Promise to trust:** He will cause Satan to flee from me if I resist him

**What will result if I experience this attribute today:** Courage, motivation, safety, victory over evil

## **David and Goliath (pt.5)**

1 Samuel 17 Day 5

**1 Sam.18:6** When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes.

For those 40 days it was not looking good at all. Those women knew if the Philistines were victorious it would be a life of being raped, used as slaves, tortured, seeing their children butchered – a life of horror. And for 40 days it seemed like that was the way it was headed. And then one day a runner comes back with the news – “David has defeated the Philistines! The soldiers are taking a long time to get back because it is

such an ordeal to haul all the plunder back. Now you are not only safe and free, but rich!.” And they are singing and dancing in the streets.

If David’s victory is a picture of the final victory of Christ over evil, what is the joy of these women a picture of? It is a picture of the exuberant, inexpressible, uncontainable joy that all who have loved the Lord Jesus Christ will experience on that Day. Someday you and I are going to see the final defeat of evil with our own eyes and I don’t care if you are an emotional or non-emotional type, we will be so full of joy and happiness that we will be literally shouting for joy, and dancing in the streets, and saying, “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands, and Christ has destroyed all evil!”

**Rev.19:1-4 After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, <sup>2</sup> for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants." <sup>3</sup> And again they shouted: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever." <sup>4</sup> The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: "Amen, Hallelujah!"**

**2 Peter 3:10-14 the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. <sup>11</sup> Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup> as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup> But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.**

*Please, dear Lord, open Your servant’s eyes to the gloriousness of this promise that I might be full of joy for Your glory. Teach me to live in a way that points constantly to my hope in Your promise to defeat all evil forever!*

**Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy:** The God who will utterly destroy all evil forever

**Promise to trust:** He will destroy evil and suffering and death

**What will result if I experience this attribute today:** Hope!