

The Attitude of Great Faith

David & Saul Pt.2: David & Goliath pt.1

1 Samuel 17:1-27

Summary: The threat: Philistines in a 40-day standoff with Israel. Israel is outgunned, but Philistines reluctant to attack because of Saul's general success against them. They want Champion warfare. Saul and his men have sinful fear (failure to trust promises is the root of all sin). We learn from David as a picture of Christ and from his example (attitude, words, and actions). His attitude of shock that no one would fight the giant came from his daily readiness, living in the presence of God and resting on His promises. That enable David to see reality instead of what everyone else saw.

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Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Socoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah. 2 Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. 3 The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them. 4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. 5 He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; 6 on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. 7 His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him. 8 Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." 10 Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other."

¹¹ On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified. ¹² Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul's time he was old and well advanced in years. ¹³ Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. ¹⁴ David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, ¹⁵ but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem. ¹⁶ For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand. ¹⁷ Now Jesse said to his son David, "Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. ¹⁸ Take along these ten

cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them. ¹⁹ They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines." ²⁰ Early in the morning David left the flock with a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. ²¹ Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. ²² David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and greeted his brothers. ²³ As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. ²⁴ When the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear. ²⁵ Now the Israelites had been saying, "Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his father's family from taxes in Israel." ²⁶ David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" ²⁷ They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, "This is what will be done for the man who kills him."

Introduction: the threat vv.1-10

The morning fog was still heavy down in the bottom of the sprawling valley, but it was starting to lift at the top of the hill as one by one the men were emerging from their tents. The crisp morning air and the first rays of the sun feel good as they stretch and greet the new day. A few bites of cheese and bread and it's time to gather together the gear and draw up the battle lines. The already subdued conversations become even more hushed as the clearing of the mist reveals the vicious, bloodthirsty Philistine hordes on the opposite hill across the valley of Elah. This standoff has been going now for over a month. One of the soldiers is making his way through some boulders up to his position on the battle line, and when he gets up to his position and looks out over the sea of Philistines less than a half mile away on the south side of the valley he thinks, if these Philistines break through our line here, Israel will be ravaged.

He can remember just like it was yesterday when he and the rest of Saul's army had to run for their lives as the Philistines took over Saul's headquarters in Micmash – deep in the heart of Israelite territory. This is nothing like that. Now at least we are facing off against them at the valley of Elah. Yes, they have crossed over into Israelite territory and have taken Socoh, which is a Judean town, but it's still right on the border of Philistia, not miles into the heart of Israel like Micmash.

Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Socoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Socoh and Azekah.

² Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. ³ The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them.

Maybe the Philistines have heard about Saul and this tormenting evil spirit. Maybe they can sense our weakness.

Or maybe they are just thinking like the officials of Aram in the time of Ahab.



This is a photograph of the valley of Elah where the battle with Goliath took place



1 Ki.20:23 .."[the Israelites'] gods are gods of the hills. That is why they were too strong for us. But if we fight them on the plains, surely we will be stronger than they.

When Jonathan attacked the Philistine garrison at Micmash the Israelites routed the Philistines and drove them out of the hill country. But now they are facing off in a wide open valley, where the Philistines really have an advantage with all their bronze and iron weaponry. Nevertheless, the Philistines were not eager to attack the Israelite line. Both sides knew that a full scale battle between these armies would be a bloodbath on both sides. Combat in those days was incredibly brutal, and neither side was eager to rush into it. On the one hand the Philistines had superior weaponry. But on the other hand the Israelites had enjoyed quite a bit of success against the Philistines under Saul.

Saul's successes (So both sides reluctant – representative combat)

Under Saul the Philistines really were mostly subdued. The summary of Saul's whole reign appears in at the end of ch.14.

1 Sam.14:47-48 After Saul had assumed rule over Israel, he fought against their enemies on every side: Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he inflicted punishment on them. 48 He fought valiantly and defeated the Amalekites, delivering Israel from the hands of those who had plundered them.¹

We have been reading about the exceptions in ch.13-16 as we watched God's judgment on Saul. But don't think that defeat was the rule for Saul – it was the exception. The reason this is important is because it highlights God's compassion and faithfulness. One of God's purposes in making Saul the king was to give the people relief from the Philistines.

1 Sam.9:16 About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him leader over my people Israel; he will deliver my people from the hand of the Philistines. I have looked upon my people, for their cry has reached me."

Saul himself was a punishment upon the Israelites, but God is so merciful that He can't bring Himself to judge them without mixing a whole lot of mercy in with the punishment. And so through Saul God gave Israel a great deal of success against the Philistines.

And so both sides are reluctant to attack. The Philistines wanted this war to be decided by a champion in representative mortal combat. A champion, in those days, was a man who volunteered to go on behalf of his country one on one with a champion from the other side in a fight to the death. There are some incredibly tough guys in Saul's army, but this champion the Philistines have sent out is an absolute monster.

⁴ A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. ⁵ He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels.

(That's 126 lb. That's like wearing a backpack with a dozen 10lb bowling balls.)

⁶ on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back.

(Javelin is probably not a good translation. This was more likely a curved sword with the cutting edge on the outside of the curve – like a scimitar.)

⁷ His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels.

¹ See also David's summary of Saul's reign in 2 Sam.1:19-27 where he calls Saul a swift, powerful, mighty weapon of war.

(That's 15 lb. Imagine throwing a spear with two gallons of milk on the end.

Corroborating evidence of giants

And lest you think this is an exaggeration, there is some very interesting corroborating evidence that there were people that were this big. There is an Egyptian papyrus letter dated in the 13th C B.C. describing fierce warriors in Canaan who were 7 to 9 feet tall. And archeologists have dug up at least two female skeletons from 12th C B.C. Israel that were both over 7 feet. Remember the report of the spies in Nm.13 when they came back from inspecting the Promised Land?

Nm.13:32-33 All the people we saw there are of great size. ³³ We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.

A generation later Joshua ended up fighting those very Anakites. He wiped them out. (Josh.11) Completely eliminated them from the hill country. None of them survived except in three places – Gaza, Ashdod, and Gath. Isn't it interesting that in v.4, when the writer is introducing Goliath, he happens to mention this little detail about where Goliath was from?

4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp.

Corroborated by three different writers of Scripture, by an Egyptian document, and by archeological finds. So Goliath really was almost 10 ft. tall. He was 2 feet taller than Yao Ming of the Houston Rockets. Yao Ming is 7'6 and even though he has a relatively slender build, he weighs 310lb. So Goliath probably weighed well over 400 lbs., and very possibly over 500 – even if he had very little fat.

5 ... His shield bearer went ahead of him.

They had two kinds of shields – a small round one and a very large rectangular one. The shield bearer would have had the latter. So even if you could get close enough to Goliath to throw a spear or shoot an arrow, all he has to do is duck behind his shield, then stand up and put a quick end to your life with that incredible spear of his. And not only is he really big and really strong, but he's also really mean.

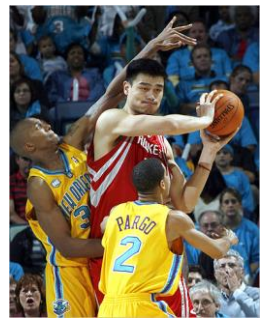
8 Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." 10 Then the Philistine² said, "This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other."

Sinful fear v.11

Saul should have gone

¹¹ On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

² After having called him "Goliath" twice in this introduction, from here on the writer only refers to him as "the philistine" (27 times in this chapter).



This is a lot different Saul than we saw back in ch.11, when the Spirit was with him. He was fearless then.

Saul is the logical candidate to go against Goliath – he’s the biggest guy in Israel. Normally in a situation like this the king would hold back to give some valiant soldier an opportunity to demonstrate his strength and valor. But this has been 40 days. Obviously no one else is stepping up. It’s way past time for Saul to get out there and face this philistine.

Do you ever read this and wonder, “Where’s Jonathan?” Not even Jonathan was willing to fight him – or Abner. If it were just a matter of risking his life for the sake of the nation no doubt Jonathan would have done it in a heartbeat. But it wasn’t just a matter of risking your own life. If you lose, you just made the entire Israelite nation the subjects of the ruthless Philistines. And so all of the Israelite soldiers, including Saul, were cowards.

Forbidden

This kind of fear was strictly forbidden by God many, many times in the law.

Dt.20:1 When you go to war against your enemies and see horses and chariots and an army greater than yours, do not be afraid of them, because the LORD your God, who brought you up out of Egypt, will be with you.³

The most important command is to love God, and the most essential expression of love for God is trusting in His great and precious promises. Failure to trust Him is like lighting up a big, neon sign around your neck that says, “My God is weak, unreliable, and dishonest.” There is no worse thing you could do against God than to know Him, and still not believe His promises and trust Him.

Lack of faith is the cause of all our sin

Lack of faith is the monster that generates the sin in our lives. When you sin it’s because you are not trusting in God’s promises. Whether it’s the sin of anger⁴ or complaining or discontent or greed or boredom,⁵ or lust, or sexual sin, or gluttony - all those sins are failures to believe God when He promises that if we seek hard after Him He will satisfy the appetites and longings of our souls. When you fail to believe that you will either seek out a substitute like food or sex or money, or you will just be miserable and gripe and complain and grumble in your heart or get angry. And that’s why fear of circumstances is such a horrible sin.⁶ We have no right to fear anyone or anything but God. All our fear belongs to Him just like all our love belongs to Him.

³ (See also Nm.14:9, 21:34, Dt.1:21, 1:29, 3:2, 3:22, 7:18, Dt.31:6, 31:8)

⁴ When you get angry with sinful anger, the reason you’re angry is because of some unfulfilled desire. Your soul has legitimate appetites just like your body does, and when you get angry it’s because someone or something has cut off access to the fulfillment of one of those appetites. You have an appetite for justice, and so when someone treats you unjustly, it makes you mad. You have an appetite for happiness, and so when someone cuts off your access to the things you look to for happiness, it makes you mad. You have an appetite for honor and meaning and peace and security and awe and beauty and numerous other good things.

⁵ Boredom is when one is unhappy due to lack of interest. While boredom in a specific instance may not be sin, if one’s life is dominated by boredom it is a sign that he is failing to take great delight in and be thrilled by the glory of God, as Scripture routinely commands us.

⁶ Being afraid was connected with rebellion against God.

Nm.14:9 Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land ... the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.

Rebellion against God and being afraid of enemies go hand in hand, because fearing man leads to rebellion against God. You will seek to please whomever it is that you fear. When we fear man we will adjust our behavior to please man, and it is impossible to live as a man-pleaser and a God-pleaser at the same time, because God is pleased by different things than man is pleased by.

Man pleasing requires movement away from God, and it shows God to be less important and less worthy and less of a legitimate threat than the human beings we are trying to please. The things and people you fear the most are those things or people whom you think have the ability to take away your happiness and comfort.

So when you fear someone you are saying, “That person is the one who is in charge of my comfort and joy.” That’s why Isa.51:12 starts out...

Isa.51:12 I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men...?

Isa.51:12 I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass?

So Saul and his army are showing themselves not only cowards, but, more importantly, disobedient and unbelieving apostates. God had guaranteed victory! Has everyone in Israel forgotten the conquest of Canaan? When the people didn't trust in God's promise of victory, and they were afraid of the giants, God punished them severely. But when Joshua and the new generation believed God's promise and went into the land, they had victory after victory. Israel is cowering now because of one single giant. Joshua fought entire armies of Goliaths and won. When Israel was obedient they cut through the armies of giants along with every other army like a hot knife through butter. Is there no one left in Israel who remembers that? The first 11 verses paint a picture of hopeless blackness, and then in v.12 hope arrives.

David's Example: attitude v.12ff

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

Just when it seems that all hope is lost, God's anointed comes up over the hill. And as we have seen already, there are two major things we need to learn from this. One is David's example of godliness. Scripture is clear that the reason we have so many details of David's life is so we can learn what godliness looks like. And the other main thing we learn from David in this passage is how to take greater delight in the one David was a picture of – the Lord Jesus Christ. We will study this later. For now we will start with the first one – learning from David's example of godliness.

Serve in a way that brings glory to God

Most everyone would agree that when it comes to courageous acts of great faith, 1 Sam.17 stands as a high water mark in the Bible. The account of David and Goliath is one of the most beloved stories in all of literature. And the most impressive and wonderful thing about it is that way it glorifies God. If something wonderful happens and you are not very involved in it, it's easy to point to God as the one who did it. But if you put forth a great effort and do some extremely heroic thing – the more skill and effort you put forth the harder it is to make it obvious to people that the power came from God and not you.

You can say it was from God, but that by itself usually isn't enough. Sometimes a football player will score a touchdown and then kneel down and bow his head in prayer, and then stand up and point toward heaven when the people cheer. If their motive in doing that is to point to God as the source of their strength so that God receives glory instead of them, then they are to be commended for doing that. It is a beautiful motive. However it doesn't work very well. When you turn on the post game show the commentators are not marveling at the power and grace of God when they show the replay.

How can you do something that requires a great deal of discipline, skill, courage, strength, intelligence- and manage to do it in such a way that glorifies God? In 1 Pe.4 Peter is discussing the use of spiritual gifts. And he commands us all to use our gifts in order to be good stewards of God's grace that is dispensed through our gifts. And then he says this:

The one you fear is also the one you regard as the source of your safety and comfort. And so we have no right to fear anyone but God. Just as all our love and worship belong to God, so does all our fear. We should all search our hearts constantly to see if we are beginning to be unfaithful to God by giving our fear to someone besides Him. Is there someone whose opinion you are so concerned about that you let that concern drive your behavior more than fear of God's displeasure drives your behavior? For example your wife. Are you so afraid of her anger that you fail to reprove her when she sins or take what you believe is the wisest course in a hard decision? Are you so afraid of your husband's displeasure that you work harder at impressing him than you do at pleasing God? Are your actions and words when you are here at church calculated mostly to impress people and cause them to like you, or to please God? Are you so afraid of your children's displeasure that you fail to discipline them as you should?

1 Pe.4:11 If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

It is not enough to just use your spiritual gift to serve God and dispense God's grace to people. You must do that, but you must find a way to do it that brings glory to God, not to you. You must find a way to do it with the strength God provides and in such a way that it is obvious to all that it was God's strength and not yours. That is not easy. It requires a lot more than just saying, "It was God's grace, not my strength." And I don't know of any place in the Bible that gives a more explicit, detailed example of how to do something great in a way that brings glory to God than the account of David and Goliath.

David used intelligence, weapons, skill, and courage

So let's begin by asking this question: Who supplied the power to defeat Goliath? God. So if the source of the power was God and not David, why was it that Goliath didn't die until David showed up? And if the answer to that question is, "God did not kill the Giant until David arrived because God is pleased to release His great power through faith," then why didn't David just go out into the valley, sit down on the ground, fold his hands and say, "I'm trusting God"?

What exactly was the difference between David's approach and Goliath's? The text makes a big point about the fact that Goliath had a sword and spear and David did not. But David did have weapons – a sling and a staff.

Slinging

Don't confuse the sling with a slingshot. They are very different. The sling was a pouch with two long straps – about 4' long. The slinger would put a stone in the pouch, swing it around and then let go of one strap, sending that rock out as fast as 100 mph. (They would only swing it one revolution.) And so slings had a distance advantage over every other kind of weapon. In David's time a bow could shoot an arrow about 100 yards. A sling can send a slingstone twice that far. The sling was not a child's toy. It was a common (and lethal) weapon of warfare.



Judges 20:16 ...there were seven hundred chosen men who were left-handed, each of whom could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.



That's describing the Benjaminite army toward the end of the period of the Judges. And incidentally, Saul was a Benjaminite, so he knew all about slings. In fact, some of Saul's relatives were great slingers.

1 Chrn.12:1-2 These were the men who came to David at Ziklag, while he was banished from the presence of Saul son of Kish (they were among the warriors who helped him in battle; ² they were armed with bows and were able to shoot arrows or to sling stones right-handed or left-handed; they were kinsmen of Saul from the tribe of Benjamin)

Archeologists have found tens of thousands of slingstones, but not very many slings. One reason for that is the sling was a low-status weapon, and so they were not often put into the tombs of warriors like other weapons were. Although, one notable exception is the tomb of king Tut, which did have a sling in it.



To the right is a picture of some of the slingstones archeologists have recovered from David's time in ancient Israel. Later on they were smaller, but the ones they have found from David's time were a little bigger than a baseball.



So a sling could be an effective weapon if you're good. The problem with using them for mortal combat, though, is if you miss you're in real trouble. Once your rocks are gone about all you can do is slap the guy with your leather strap.

Although we tend to forget that David had two weapons. He took not only a sling but also his staff. (v.40) If the whole sling idea didn't work, he was ready to engage Goliath hand to hand with his staff. And knowing David, I'm guessing he was just as lethal with that staff as he was with his sling.

What was the difference between David & Goliath?

So David was armed with the best equipment he knew. He even tried on Saul's armor and sword, and for a short time was considering using that. And the only reason he didn't is he decided the weapons he was used to and skilled with would be more effective.

So Goliath used the best weapons of warfare that he knew; David used the best weapons of warfare that he knew. Goliath used a common strategy of intimidation through trash talking; so did David. Goliath advanced toward David; David ran toward Goliath. So what was the difference? Listen to David's trash talking:

⁴⁶ ... I'll strike you down and cut off your head. ... and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷ All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

David says that as a result of what he was going to do all the world would know that it is not by the sword or spear that the Lord saves. *But David used weapons!* So if David kills Goliath by means of weapons, how is it that that will teach the whole world that it is not by weapons that the Lord saves?

David glorified God by trusting Him; Goliath glorified himself by trusting in himself

The short answer to that question is this: The difference between David's approach and Goliath's approach; and the reason why David's victory showed God as the source of the power rather than weapons, was that David's success clearly and obviously came through David's faith in God's promise. David brought glory to God by trusting God, and Goliath tried to bring glory to himself by trusting himself.

There are at least three things David did to make it clear that the power was from God and not from himself. Those three things were David's actions, his words, and his attitude. When you use your spiritual gift to serve God you can do it in a way that will bring glory to yourself or you can do it in a way that will bring glory to God. And the way to do everything you do in such a way as to bring glory to God is to follow David's example in your actions, words, and attitudes. So let's take a look at each of those in the order they appear in the text. The first thing the chapter emphasizes is David's attitude.

Lowly David

(When David first shows up in this chapter the writer immediately begins speaking not about David but about Jesse. At first it seems strange, because it sounds like he is re-introducing Jesse after he just got done telling us all about him in ch.16. I think the key to understanding that section lies in the phrase "Jesse the Ephrathite." We will examine that in more detail when we talk about how this passage points to Jesus as Messiah. For now just observe that David shows up as a lowly character.)

The writer never calls David a man in this chapter. He likes the word "man." He uses it 19 times in this one chapter. He calls Goliath a man. He calls the Israelite soldiers men – any *man* who kills Goliath

gets a reward. Goliath asks for a man to come face him. Even Jesse is a man. The Hebrew says David was the son of a man, Jesse. In fact, every character in the entire account is called a man except David. He's just the son of a man. He's called a youth, a boy, a son, a keeper of sheep – but never a man.

12 ...Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul's time he was old and well advanced in years. ¹³ Jesse's three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. ¹⁴ David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, ¹⁵ but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's sheep at Bethlehem.

So David appears to be too young to fight, and so he gets the job of being the gopher and errand boy. Jesse had 5 sons at home that he could have sent, but the task goes to the lowliest and least important.

¹⁶ For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand. ¹⁷ Now Jesse said to his son David, "Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. ¹⁸ Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them. ¹⁹ They are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines."

So God providentially brings David to the scene of the battle at just the right time.

David's shock at the reward vv.20-30

20 Early in the morning⁷ David left the flock with a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. 21 Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. 22 David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and greeted his brothers. 23 As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. 24 When the Israelites saw the man, they all ran from him in great fear.

That's the second time he has mentioned their pathetic fear. I have always pictured this where Goliath was way down in the valley shouting from a long distance. But here it says they *ran* from him. Evidently the philistine would come right up to the soldiers – close enough to where they felt enough of a threat that they actually turned and ran. Goliath was absolutely terrorizing them.

²⁵ Now the Israelites had been saying, "Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his father's family from taxes in Israel."

That is a huge incentive – to be able to marry into royalty and become the king's son in law- obviously that's not an incentive Saul could offer very many times. Saul was offering the largest reward he could possibly offer.

²⁶ David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel?"

⁷ So David arrives just in time for that morning battle cry. So when it says he left early in the morning – that's really early; early enough for him to load up, travel 10 to 15 miles, and still get there in time for the morning battle cry.

So David hears them say what this reward is, and then immediately asks again. “This is what will be done for the man who kills him...” And David hears that and says, “What will be done for the name who kills him?” Does David have ADD or what? Alzheimer’s? Is he deaf? Why does he have to hear it twice? And not just twice – look down at v.30. After his little argument with Eliab in vv.27-29 David turns away from him and again.

³⁰ He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before.

If you want to know why David keeps asking just look at the 2nd half of v.26. The NIV doesn’t translate it, but there is a conjunction between David’s two sentences – the word “for.”

26 David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

The “for” tells us that the second sentence explains the first. David’s point is that it’s ridiculous for there to have to be a reward for this. He’s an uncircumcised Philistine, and he has just blasphemed God? His head needs to be removed from his body – what is everyone waiting for? Don’t tell me you’re afraid of him. He’s a human being, going against the living God!

In v.43 Goliath cursed David by his gods. Do you know who the chief God of the Philistines was? Dagon! Remember him from when the Philistines captured the ark? Goliath is defying Yahweh in the name of a god whose head, at this time, is attached to his body by superglue. Yahweh decapitated him right in his own temple and slammed him down on his face. Yahweh forced Dagon to bow before Him and then literally crushed him to pieces.

David isn’t asking again and again because he is interested in the reward. He doesn’t even accept the reward. When the time comes to marry Saul’s daughter he refuses because he feels he’s not worthy to be the king’s son-in-law. David isn’t asking because he wants the reward, he’s asking repeatedly because he just can’t believe his ears. It’s almost impossible for David to even fathom that someone would have to offer a reward to get the men to go dispatch some speck of dust that’s defying Almighty God.

If you heard a king tell his servants, “I’ll give a million dollars to anyone who will go get me a glass of water” you would have a few questions. “How much? A million dollars? For what? Just to get him a drink of water? Why? And nobody is doing it? What on earth is going on?” David’s shock and amazement gives us insight into his attitude about God’s promises. He’s baffled over how anyone could possibly be reluctant to be in the bulldozer in a bulldozer vs. a sandcastle contest. David had such a spiritual perspective that he seemed unable to even understand the temporal perspective. He can’t relate to it. He can’t relate to people who look at things from an earthly perspective. David had such a focus on God’s promises and power and faithfulness, that it truly did confuse and perplex him how anyone could possibly be reluctant to fight a 10 foot tall battle tested warrior and experienced killer who was armed to the teeth.

We have a whole lot more to study in this chapter, but for now let’s just learn what we can from David’s shock and surprise. It is obviously important to honor God in your actions and words, but just as important (if not more important) is to honor Him in your attitudes and affections and emotions. If we are going to show God to be powerful and good, we will put that on display for people by which things shock us and which things do not. My goal is to have such faith in God’s great and precious promise that it is obvious just from my attitudes that He is powerful and trustworthy.

How to develop these kinds of affections

So what can you and I do to develop these kinds of affections and attitude? How do you get so the things that surprise you and don't surprise you reflect the awesome power and perfect goodness of your God. That comes from a life lived in the presence of God. David was ready for the whole Goliath challenge because he spent all his days living in the presence of the living God.

David was prepared

Remember – it was God's providence that brought David to the battle. It really struck me this week that when David woke up that morning he had no idea there would be anything special about that day. He had no advance notice. Probably the greatest fight of his life and he had no time at all to prepare for it. Whatever resources and spiritual preparation David had on a normal, average day was all the resources and preparation he would have on the biggest military day of his life. He had no idea when he was seeking God in his routine morning prayers that day that hours later he would be going one-on-one with a giant in what would become the most famous military conflict of all time. How seldom do we have advance notice on those days that become major turning points in our lives. How earnest, then, should be our prayers every day! It's so important to seek grace from God with all earnestness every morning, because most likely the most trying day of your life will come completely unexpectedly. Think of how many times the NT warns us to be alert, vigilant, to watch, to be on guard, to be ready to seize upon opportunity, to be ready for sneak attack from our adversary the devil. David was ready every single day to volunteer for a fight to the death with a giant.

1) Live in the presence of God

The Lord has blessed me with so many resources for studying His Word, there have been a few times when I could really use a certain resource for studying a passage, but I don't, because I forget that I even have it! But the resources that are on my desk in plain view that I use every day – I never forget about those. If you think about the power and glory of God for an hour on Sundays and a few times during the week, when you look out over the valley of Elah you're going to see pretty much the same thing everyone else sees. To see what David saw you need to have vivid, powerful glimpses of Him every day and throughout each day.

Psalm 25:15 My eyes are always on the LORD

Psalm 141:8 But my eyes are fixed on you

Psalm 63:2 I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory.

Psalm 27:4 One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.

David lived his life with his attention fixed on the power and goodness and glory of God. And the attitudes of his heart grew out of that.

Most people think what made David's action in this event so impressive was the size of Goliath. But that misses the point. What makes David's action so impressive was the irrelevance of Goliath's size in David's mind. Because that showed that David was seeing things as they really were. If you see a big difference between God vs. a guy that's 5'3" on the one hand or God vs. a guy that's 10 feet tall on the other hand, then you aren't seeing things as they really are. If you think there is a big difference between a bulldozer pushing over a 6" high house of cards or a 3' high house of cards then you just don't understand about bulldozers.

In ch.16 there was a major emphasis on the concept of seeing. The Hebrew word for seeing was used over and over to highlight the main idea of the chapter which was the fact that man and God see different

things. Here in this chapter the man after God's own heart sees a much different scene than what everyone sees. When everyone else sees a huge, invincible warrior, all David can see is some yahoo blaspheming the living God. Saul and the rest of the army see a reason to hesitate; David looks at the same valley and all he can see is a reason to take immediate action. Where they saw the most formidable, terrifying threat, David, no matter how hard he strained his eyes, for the life of him could not see any trace of a threat anywhere. David looked out over the valley of Elah and saw God and His promise, and then beneath that a whole bunch of little details that fit into that. Everyone looked at those details as though they were the main issue. Saul and the soldiers sized up Goliath against the measure of themselves. David sized him up against the power and faithfulness of God.

Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith

2) Spend your days resting on His promises

That's the first part. The other part is to know what His promises are, but not just to know them as abstract principles, but to have spent your days every day leaning on them and experiencing their reliability. Imagine a little boy bringing his buddy to see his tree fort. And he steps on a little branch to climb up, and the friend says, "How did you know that branch would hold your weight?" And the boy says, "Oh, I've stepped on it a hundred times climbing this tree." That's when you'll really have confidence in God's promises.

Psalm 119:138-140 8 The statutes you have laid down are righteous; they are fully trustworthy. ... 140 Your promises have been thoroughly tested, and your servant loves them.

Benediction: 1Ki 8:56-61 Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people ...57 May the LORD our God be with us as he was with our fathers... 58 May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways... 60 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God and that there is no other.

Devotionals

David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17 Day 1

Now Jesse said to his son David, "Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp.

Until David's father gave him this errand, this was just a normal day for David. He had no idea when he was seeking God in his routine morning prayers that day that hours later he would be going one-on-one with a giant in what would become the most famous military conflict of all time. How seldom do we have advance notice on those days that become major turning points in our lives. How earnest should be our prayers, then, every day.

Dear Lord God,

You know the end from the beginning, and every hour of ever day of my life was written in Your book before one of them came to be. You know all that is in store for me today. Give Your servant the grace to be vigilant and alert. Help me redeem the time and make the most of every opportunity. Open my eyes especially, dear Lord, to opportunities to glorify You by acts of faith.

Father, there is no mention of You in this chapter until v.26 when Your servant David begins speaking. Goliath thinks he is defying Saul, not Yahweh. The Israelites say nothing about You. David's brothers don't mention You. Until David speaks, everyone sees this situation through eyes that were blind to You. They saw a giant, two armies, Saul, swords and spears, battle lines, positions – but not You.

But none of that deterred David from immediately speaking about You. Dear Father, I love to speak about You when I'm around others who speak about You. But when I'm with people who are speaking only about temporal things, I'm so prone to just follow along. If the topic at hand is theology, I'm happy to join in. But if it's some earthly thing being discussed without reference to You, how quick I am to just join right in with the secular mentality. Why do thoughts of You not dominate my thinking to the point where they would come out in conversation no matter what everyone else is saying? I think about You a lot when I am alone, but why is that kind of thinking so easily dismissed when I begin interacting with others?

Dear Father, You are the worthiest topic of my conversation. Your glory is relevant to every circumstance. Your grace is foundational for any and every matter at hand. Open my eyes to see that more clearly, dear God, and show me why it is that my speech can so easily become temporarily secular.

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God whose glory is relevant and foundational to every circumstance or conversation.

Promise to trust: He will prove a worthy topic of conversation

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Interest in speaking of Him, confidence

David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17 Day 2

¹⁰ **Then the Philistine [Goliath] said, "This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other."** ¹¹ **On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.**

This kind of fear was strictly forbidden by God many, many times in the law.

Dt.20:1 When you go to war against your enemies and see horses and chariots and an army greater than yours, do not be afraid of them, because the LORD your God, who brought you up out of Egypt, will be with you.⁸

⁸ (See also Nm.14:9, 21:34, Dt.1:21, 1:29, 3:2, 3:22, 7:18, Dt.31:6, 31:8)

For the Israelites, being afraid of a larger, stronger army was a great sin because God has promised victory. The most important command is to love God, and the most essential expression of love for God is trusting in His great and precious promises. Failure to trust Him is a slap in His face. It's like lighting up a big, neon sign around your neck that says, "My God is weak, unreliable, and dishonest."

For the Israelites, being afraid went along with rebellion against God.

Nm.14:9 Only do not rebel against the LORD. And 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.

The reason fearing man goes along with rebellion against God is because you will seek to please whomever it is that you fear. When we fear man we will adjust our behavior to please man, and it is impossible to live as a man-pleaser and a God-pleaser at the same time, because God is pleased by different things than man is pleased by. Man pleasing requires movement away from God, and it shows God to be less important and less worthy than the human beings we are trying to please. The one you fear is also the one you regard as the source of your safety and comfort. And so we have no right to fear anyone but God. Just as all our love and worship belong to God, so does all our fear.

Isa.51:12 I, even I, am he who comforts you. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass?

Dear God in heaven, the Holy One of Israel, am I guilty of fearing man or circumstances? Is there some way that I am allowing that sin in my life without even realizing it? Open my eyes, dear Lord, to see if there is some way that I am doing that. Is there someone whose opinion of me I'm so concerned about that I let that concern drive my behavior more than fear of Your displeasure? Am I ever more driven by my wife's displeasure or my children's displeasure or anyone else's than I am by fear of Your displeasure? Oh Lord, if so, please show me that I might repent and forsake that sin.

I want to be a man of great faith. I want to be a man whose life shows You to be powerful and reliable and trustworthy and loving and wise. I want to do something like what Jonathan did at Micmash and what David did with Goliath. They exercised great faith by trusting in and acting upon Your promise of Israelite victory; what promise can I exercise great faith by trusting and acting on this week? I'm never closer to You than when I'm taking delight in trusting You. Give me the faith, dear God to trust You this week

David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17 Day 3

Good morning dear Father in heaven,

Make me a man of aggressive faith. The delightful stories in Your Word of men and women who showed great faith are usually more than just someone hanging on during a time of trial, saying, "I'm trusting God to get me through this." No doubt that is a good expression of faith, but mostly faith is pictured not as just hanging on until a crisis blows over, but rather stepping out in aggressive ways against all odds. Teach me how to be aggressive in my clinging to Your promises dear God. Show me what that looks like in a time when Your promises are not about military victory over Philistines. Give me an eye for those commands that call for aggressive action – taking initiative in a broken relationship or a ministry opportunity.

If I'm ever tempted with worry or anxiety about money, let my trust in Your promise in Mt.6:33 be like Jonathan and David's trust in Your promise of military victory.

All these things - Mt.6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

If I'm tempted with thinking that my joy or comfort will come from some earthly thing, or I'm tempted to prefer something above You, or if I start to become angry because of some unfulfilled desire, let my trust in Ps.63:3 and Ps.37:4 be like their faith in Your promise to deliver.

Better than life-Ps.63:3 Your love is better than life

Delight/Desires - Ps.37:4 Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart

When I am enticed by some earthly pleasure or by discontent or complaining, let my faith in Isa.55:2 and Ps.63:5 be like their great faith in You.

Eat what is good - Isa.55:2 Why spend money on what is not food and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me and **eat what is good** and your soul will delight in the richest of fair.

Soul will be satisfied - Ps.63:5 My **soul** will be **satisfied** as with the richest of foods.

When I am tempted to despair or lose heart, may I be valiant in my trust in Ps.23:4.

Comfort me - Ps.23:4 Even though I walk through the deepest darkness I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they **comfort me**.

If I fall into thinking that You will make fellowship with You too hard or put righteousness out of my reach, or deal with me in an overly harsh way or with a negative disposition toward me, let my faith in Ps.103:13-14 and Zeph.3:17 by like David's shock over the fact that a reward was being offered.

Father has compassion - Ps.103:13-14 As a **father** has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; ¹⁴ for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

Quiet you with his love-Zeph.3:17 The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will **quiet** you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing."

When I am tempted by stinginess make me mighty in my trust of Lk.6:38.

Given to you - Lk.6:38 **Give**, and it will be **given** to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

When I'm reluctant to seek after You because of my sin or because of Your chastisement, or I'm afraid I'll never be able to be close to You make me powerful in my trust in Hos.6:1-3.

Heal us - Hosea 6:1 "Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces but he will **heal** us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. 2 After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence. ³ Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth."

When I struggle with loneliness or fear of man make me steadfast in my belief in Jn.14:18 and Ps.10:17.

I will not leave you - John 14:18 **I** will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you

Listen attentively - Psalm 10:17 You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; you strengthen their heart, and you **listen** attentively.

When I battle with low desire to seek after You, or if I am tempted with boredom, help me be a Jonathan in my trust of Ps.89:15-16 and Ps.16:11 and Ps.36:8 and Ps.63:5.

Joyful shout - Psalm 89:15 Happy are those who know the **joyful** shout; LORD, they walk in the light of Your presence. ¹⁶ They rejoice in Your name all day long, and they exult in Your righteousness.

Presence - Psalm 16:11 You reveal the path of life to me; in Your **presence** is abundant joy; in Your right hand are eternal pleasures.

Refuge/River Psalm 36:7,8 How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find **refuge** in the shadow of your wings. They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your **river** of delights.

Soul will be satisfied - Ps.63:5 My **soul** will be **satisfied** as with the richest of foods.

If I'm tempted to become overwhelmed by circumstances make me a David in my trust of Ps.121:7-8 and Ps.8:4 and Isa.46:4.

Keep you from all harm - - Psalm 121:7-8 The LORD will **keep** you from all harm-- he will watch over your life; ⁸ the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

Mindful of him- Ps.8:4 what is man that you are **mindful** of him, the son of man that you care for him?

Sustain you - Isa.46:4 I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

When I fall into living as though this life were all there is, help me believe Isa.65:17-19 and Rev.21:4 and Heb.6:18-20 and 1 Jn.3:2-3.

New heavens and new earth - Isaiah 65:17-19 "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. ¹⁹ I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.

Tear from their eyes Revelation 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

Unchangeable things - Heb.6:18-20 God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. ¹⁹ We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, ²⁰ where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

Xerox copy (we shall be like him) - 1 John 3:2-3 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

When I suffer, give me faith in 1 Pe.4:13 that is like steel.

Overjoyed - 1 Peter 4:13 rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

If I find turmoil in my heart give me great faith in Zeph.3:17 and Ps.36:7.

Quiet you with his love-Zeph.3:17 The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing."

Refuge/River Psalm 36:7,8 How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings. They feast on the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights.

If I'm tempted to think I won't be able to make a good decision, or that You will put Your guidance out of my reach or leave me to myself, give me garrison-storming faith in Isa.30:21.

Voice behind you - Isa.30:21 Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

If I'm tempted to think a temptation is just too much for me to resist, give me giant-attacking faith in 1 Cor.10:13.

Way Out - 1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

If I am tempted with discouragement over Your chastisement, give me faith in Joel.2:25.

Years the locusts have eaten - Joel 2:25 I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten

And dear Lord, when my trust in these promises becomes weak, and I start to act or feel as though they were not complete guarantees, enable me to believe the promise of Isa.37:32.

Zeal of the LORD - Isaiah 37:32 For out of Jerusalem will come a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God whose promises are many and utterly trustworthy

Promise to trust: He will provide all I need for every circumstance

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Righteousness, joy, love, confidence, motivation, purity, contentment, strength, peace

David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17 Day 4

⁴³ [the Philistine] said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" ⁴⁵ David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷ All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands." ⁴⁸ As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him.

The sling was a common weapon of warfare and was quite deadly. David also had his staff. And yet David said that as a result of his victory all the world would know that Yahweh does not save by means of weapons. How is the world going to discern that from the fact that David killed Goliath using a weapon? Evidently it was through David's attitude and speech. It was crystal clear that David's confidence was not in his military prowess but in the LORD. And yes, he did put all that he had into the effort, but he did so in such a way as to show God the source of the victory.

1 Peter 4:10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, as good stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Good morning dear Father in heaven, the Lord of hosts,

I want to win victories in a way that shows You to be the source of the victory. Teach me how to do that. You have given me gifts and a calling; as I carry out that calling and use those gifts I know it is possible to do so in a way that brings glory to me or in a way that brings glory to You. Dear Lord, show me how to do the latter. How do I make it obvious that it's from You? Even though David was so skilled and so strong and so courageous, still he managed to make it obvious that You were the source of the victory. It seems there were at least three ways he did that.

1) His actions.

His eagerness to engage Goliath. Even though he was outmatched from a physical point of view he was not only willing to fight but ran toward Goliath. The sight of the young, unarmored shepherd sprinting toward the giant warrior, combined with his success, showed God David's faith was in God and God was the source of the victory.

Oh Lord, teach me to do that. I don't want to be presumptuous by running into something You have not called me to run into. Show me when I need to use wisdom to discern when a seemingly impossible action would be a foolish undertaking and when it would be an act of great faith.

One time when it would be obvious is when there is no other option. In times like that dear Father, give me the faith to act quickly and boldly without hesitation.

2) His words

Everything out of David's mouth made it clear where his trust was. Even when he spoke of his past exploits he did so in a way that pointed to God. His words to the men, to Saul, and to Goliath all focused totally on God. And the promises and power of God were the basis for all his logic as he reasoned.

Dear Father, I fear this is the area where I fall short the most. I am so quick to talk about profane and worthless trivia and so slow to talk about You. Sometimes I think I avoid pointing to You in my speech because I'm afraid it will sound to pious. Please forgive me dear Lord. What on earth is wrong with sounding pious? Why should I fear talking too much about You? You are my very life! You are everything to me. You control all things and are more important than anything else. No person could possibly have You be too central in his conversation. If people think I'm a phony who is trying to impress them with how religious I am, let me solve that problem by the genuineness of my life, not by eliminating You from my speech. Train my lips, dear God, to speak about You.

3) His attitude

David kept asking about the reward. He seemed to be shocked that there even was a reward – and even more shocked that no one was going out to fight. He was baffled over how anyone could possibly be reluctant to be in the bulldozer in a bulldozer vs. a sandcastle contest. David had such a spiritual perspective that he seemed unable to even understand the temporal perspective. He had such a focus on God's promises and power and faithfulness, that it truly did confuse and perplex him how anyone could possibly be reluctant to fight a 10 foot tall battle tested warrior.

Dear Lord, let me have such faith in Your great and precious promise that it is obvious just from my attitudes that You are powerful and trustworthy. Let it be clear from what surprises me and shocks me and doesn't surprise me or shock me.

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God who is worthy of total confidence

Promise to trust: He will be faithful to fulfill all His promises

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Confidence, trust, motivation, courage, eagerness, shock and confusion (at unbelief)

David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17 Day 5

The amazing success David had over Goliath is reported immediately after the account of David's anointing and the Spirit coming upon David in power. Spurgeon: "You cannot do David's work if you have not David's anointing."⁹ Even Jesus waited for the Spirit to come upon Him before He began His public ministry. The Apostles were told to wait for the Spirit to come in Jerusalem before they did anything. If we are to achieve great feats of faith we will do so only by the power of the Holy Spirit. And so if we desire to see an increase in our works of faith we must seek an increase in nearness to and empowerment by the Holy Spirit. Every believer has the Holy Spirit, but there are ever-greater experiences of enablement by the Spirit that are possible.

Ephesians 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

Luke 11:9-13 So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹ "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 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!

As His beloved children God wants us to ask Him for the Holy Spirit. Indeed, whenever we ask Him for any good thing we are in essence asking for the Spirit, since all good things come through Him.

It's so easy, dear Lord, for me to fall into thinking that the main key to getting good things is something other than Your Spirit. When I want something good, how much time do I spend using human means to get it compared to the time I spend seeking hard after Your Spirit? I have a theological understanding that tells me that seeking nearness to You is the most important thing, but when it comes down to how I actually choose to spend my time I reveal a heart that really does think by doing work is more productive than my seeking hard after nearness to You. It is as if I believed I were the one who was in charge of how blessed and how productive and how profitable my work will be. What folly!

⁹ Sermon on 1 Samuel 17.

And dear Lord, when I pray to You in a perfunctory way – saying prayers, mentioning people I have promised to pray for, but not seeking hard after Your presence and greater experiences of Your Spirit; I reveal a heart that just isn't convinced that nearness to You is what I need more than anything.

Prayer is often likened to a telephone call, but for me it is not that way.

I liken it to a dry, dusty old telegraph office in the old west.

I am alone in my little town, and when I want to, or need to,

I will put a garter on my sleeve, a visor on my head, don my spectacles,
and tap out a message to God.

Just beep, beepbeep, beep beep, beepbeep, tapping it out.

Sometimes in desperate need, like I am calling the governor's office for reinforcements,
as the bandits lay waste to my town.

Or when I am lonely and just want to talk.

Or if I have a question.

Most of the time, I am just tapping away for one reason or another.

So, He hears me, and reinforcements come.

But is that a relationship?

I so desperately want to get Him on the line.

I want to hear Him, I want to be His friend, someone He will talk to.

I want to *know* Him.¹⁰

I want to know You Lord. I don't want my "seeking" after You to be a mere tapping out of messages to You. I want to get You on the line. More than that – I want You to come to my house so I can see (experience) Your glory personally.

Why do I keep forgetting how important it is for me to seek hard after You? When a crisis comes, or some terrible failure, I realize how desperate the need is. But when times are good and prosperous and I'm enjoying victory over sin, the need doesn't feel as pressing and I seek You less (resulting in renewed crises and failures). Oh Father, put a motivation in me to seek hard after Your Spirit that is beyond just the need I feel in a crisis. Give Your servant a daily, hourly appetite that doesn't wane when times are good. Teach me to experience those good times as symptoms of nearness to You so that I crave You more; rather than seeing them as worthy substitutes for nearness to You that make me crave You less.

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God will give me experiences of His Spirit in ever-increasing measure.

Promise to trust: He will give me His Spirit and be with me

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Passionate desire for communion with Him

¹⁰ Written by a friend