

The Actions of Great Faith

David & Saul Pt.4: David & Goliath pt.3 1 Samuel 17:37-51

Summary: David's words to the blasphemer were words of outrage fueled by love for God. We should love God enough to be outraged, to speak up for Him, and to boast in His promises. In our actions we must have aggressive faith that charges after opportunity. Our actions are different from David's in that in this age It is the courage to die, not to kill.

Review.....	2
David's Words: Conversation with a blasphemer.....	2
Goliath's Jealous blaspheme.....	2
curses.....	2
Love God's name	3
Love Him enough to be outraged	4
Death by stoning for blaspheme	5
Be distressed, not entertained by blaspheme	5
Love Him enough to speak up for Him	5
Requires courage.....	5
Love Him enough to boast in Him.....	7
David's actions: Aggressive Faith	8
David's Weapons.....	8
Pace – run to the enemy!	9
Keep your eye on the potential fruit, not the obstacles	9
Like god like worshipper	10
In this age It is not the courage to kill, but the courage to die	10
Conclusion.....	11

³⁶ **Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. ³⁷ The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you." ³⁸ Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. ³⁹ David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. ⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. ⁴¹ Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. ⁴² He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him. ⁴³ He 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.** ⁴⁹ **Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.** 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.**

Review

The life of faith is a life of behaving, speaking, and feeling in such a way as to show God to be glorious. And the last couple weeks we have been learning from David's example of the *attitude* of faith and *words* of faith. In 1 Samuel 17 David gets into four conversations. David's reaction to secular conversation was to respond with words that frame the same things they were saying in a theological content. When David spoke with people whose speech was temporal and secular he did what Paul did in 2 Corinthians 10:5 –

2 Cor.10:5 we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Just take what is secular and force it into a spiritual context.

A second conversation was with Eliab, who was just irrational and hostile. David's response to that was to simply turn away and continue on with the important matters at hand. Next came the conversation was with Saul, who was extremely unsupportive and discouraging. And David's response to him was to not only refuse to become discouraged, but to encourage Saul and the others by helping them see the power and faithfulness of God. So that is how the heart of faith responds in those three contexts.

But there is one more conversation David had in that chapter – his conversation with Goliath. How do you deal with a blasphemer?

David's Words: Conversation with a blasphemer Goliath's Jealous blaspheme

We are down in the valley of Elah now. David considered Saul's suggestions about how to fight, vetoed them, and now he is moving out on his own plan. In verse 42 Goliath sees David coming forward from the Israelite line.

⁴² He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him.

Isn't that interesting that Goliath, in the middle of a fight to the death, notices that David is especially handsome? David must have been an incredibly attractive person to be right in the middle of mortal combat and have his opponent, who hates him, think, "Wow – that's a really good-looking kid." It seems from the text that Goliath's assessment of him being ruddy and handsome seems to go along with him despising David. There just seems to be an element of jealousy wherever David goes – everyone is jealous of him.

curses

The next thing Goliath notices is that David has come with a staff rather than a sword and spear.

43 He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?"

That is all David's staff was – a stick. Goliath says, "Am I a dog?" and David's probably thinking, "*Sort of. Although I was thinking more like a lion or bear. But either way – yes, an animal that I am going to have to put down. I may use the stick; I may use the rock – or maybe I'll just grab you by your big ugly beard and knock you out.*" Whatever David was thinking, he does not respond to this remark. Goliath was already angry that they sent out a boy with no armor to fight him, but the fact that he is coming with a stick really makes him mad.

43 ... And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

Bad idea. You don't curse a child of Abraham.

Genesis 12:2-3 "I will make you into a great nation and...3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse (same word)

You curse David and you put yourself at odds with the God of Abraham.

44 "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!"

He threatens not only to kill David but also to prevent anyone from burying him so he will be eaten as carrion – picked apart and devoured by unclean animals – which is an exceedingly horrible thought for a Jewish person.

So how is David going to respond to Goliath's blaspheme?

Love God's name

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.

Even David's trash talking ends up being God-centered. Goliath's threats were designed to intimidate his opponent and to show off his strength and confidence in himself. David's threats were designed to glorify God, so that no one could possibly mistake where the power is coming from. So David starts by pointing to God. Once again we see his faith – he does not back down, is not intimidated in the slightest, does not negotiate, and 100% of his confidence is riding on the promises of God. So he responds with words of faith, but that's not all. David's not done.

46 This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head.

It sounds to me like David is pretty mad. "I'm not just going to kill you Goliath. First I'm going to knock you out, and then I'm going to cut off your head."

And Goliath is thinking, "*With what? Your stick? You don't even have a sword.*" Evidently his plan right from the beginning was to use Goliath's sword. *Why bother lugging a sword all the way out there? I'll just use Goliath's.* David's still not done.

46 ... 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

Yes Goliath, the vultures and critters are going to have a meal – but not just one man – it is going to be all-you-can-eat Philistines.

That was not the agreement. The deal was two champions fight to the death, and the loser's side would be subject to the winners. The whole point of champion warfare was to avoid having the two armies fight. But David says, "Not only are you going to die Goliath, but so is your army." I think David knew they would renege on the original deal (which they did), and they would pay for it. You think David is just a little bit upset here? He just sentenced the entire Philistine army to death. And here's why...

46 ... 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."

The battle belongs to the Lord. He ordained it, He's in charge of it, it is all for His purposes, and He decides who wins. And in this case it will show Him to be more powerful if the whole philistine army is routed rather than just one champion killed. And so that is the way it is going to be.

Can we learn anything from David's desire to kill? We found in previous studies that the details of David's life are given to us as an example of godliness – an example we are to follow. And his eagerness to kill Goliath is definitely portrayed here as a good thing, not a sin. So how do we follow this example? Should we be blowing up abortion clinics or carrying slings to work or what?

Love Him enough to be outraged

There is actually a great deal we can learn from David's eagerness to kill Goliath. For one thing we should learn from his zeal for God's name. The reason he was so eager to dispatch Goliath was because Goliath was blaspheming God. David's actions against Goliath are usually thought of as an example of great faith – and rightly so. It was a faith without fear – a faith that did not flinch when threatened. It was an aggressive faith. It was a powerful faith. It was a faith that both honored God and was honored by God. No doubt about it, it was definitely an example of great faith.

But more than that, I think it was an example of great love. Faith in God and love for God are in many ways two sides of the same coin. Faith is adoring trust, and love is trusting adoration. And so if we want to have faith like David's faith we are going to have to love God like David loved Him. His faith in God was powered by his love for God. His outrage was fueled by his love for God's name. If you pay close attention to the things David says, his main focus is not Israelite freedom from the oppression of the Philistines. His main thought did not seem to be, "I need to do this so Israel can have freedom." That was secondary. The main thing that drove David was the fact that someone was defying God. Look at the very first thing David says in this account.

26 "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?"

Defying Israel was intolerable because defying God's people is the same thing as defying God. And David is shocked that a reward has to be offered for the task of removing that disgrace – as though the removal of the disgrace itself were not a big enough incentive.

36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God.

45 ... I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

For David it was all a matter of God's name.

Death by stoning for blaspheme

This may well have been the first time David's ears had ever heard blaspheme. And he absolutely refuses to stand for it. In Leviticus verse 24:16 Moses addressed the sin of blaspheme, and it is interesting - he specified that if anyone blasphemes the Lord — even a non-Israelite — guess what the penalty was? Death. And not just death, but death by stoning! I don't know if that was why David chose to use a sling, but it wouldn't surprise me. You do not blaspheme David's God when David can hear you – I don't care how big you are or how much armor you have on.

You learn a lot about what a guy loves from what makes them really mad. Some guys will put up with all kinds of insults until you start talking about their mother. Then they get upset. I think if someone started talking about David's mother that person would probably regret it, but say something about David's God, and he will put a rock in your skull. Goliath is out there shooting off his mouth, and David says, "Blaspheme God one more time - open that big mouth of yours once more and it will be the last thing you ever say before I cut off your big fat head."

Be distressed, not entertained by blaspheme

Ours is a day when Christians line up by the millions to pay a lot of money to go to a movie where they can laugh when people blaspheme God. When someone blasphemes our God there should be some outrage. There should also be compassion. You should be indignant that someone is dishonoring the God you love, and you should also feel deep compassion for the unimaginable torment that soul is going to have to endure for all eternity for his sin. And finding the right balance of anger and compassion is not an easy thing. But can we say this - whether your response is anger or compassion – just do not let it be laughing. Or indifference. There is no way to laugh or just not care at all if the person being slandered is someone you deeply love. How does the heart that loves God respond to blaspheme? It gets worked up. There is anger, there is sorrow, there is compassion – but there is NOT indifference.

Love Him enough to speak up for Him

And the same love that will get your affections worked up will also get your mouth moving. The heart that loves God will not only be outraged; it will speak up. David's attitude was just like Paul's – "I am not ashamed of my God or His Word."

Requires courage

This is not easy. There are many people who are terrified of being disliked at all, much less mocked. There are people who have made such an idol out of acceptance in the eyes of people that their whole life is calculated around being liked by everybody. All of us are inclined that way to one degree or another. And so being outraged at blaspheme is one thing, but actually speaking up is something else, because we are paralyzed by fear. And so we live in bondage. The world has us in chains, and Satan can lead us around by the nose pretty much wherever he wants just by threatening us with disfavor in the eyes of people. Sometimes we are even afraid of people in the church. If we are too expressive about speaking about God people in the church or in our own family might think we are a little kooky or "holier-than-thou."

Do not be afraid! The people who are going to mock you – the very act of mocking is proof that they will be defeated and you will be vindicated.

Php.1:27-30 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved-- and that by God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him

The fact that they oppose you is a sign from God. A lot of times people look up to heaven and say, “God, give me a sign!” Want a sign from God? How about his one? Verse 28 says that the fact that they oppose you is a sign from heaven that they will be destroyed and you will be saved. If they do not oppose you, then there is no sign that you will be saved.

And notice he says, **contending (fighting) as one man.** We need to stand together in this fight. When Goliath defied Israel, that was the same thing as defying God. When people mock the Church they are mocking God. When some fool is going on about how bad organized religion is, and how bad the Church is, and how the Church is full of nothing but hypocrites, we need to happily identify ourselves with God’s people.

Goliath did not start mocking David because he found out David was a follower of Yahweh. First Goliath defied and blasphemed Yahweh, and David saw that, and went out and identified himself with Yahweh. He saw God being mocked and went out there to join Him so that the insults intended for God would land on David. David was foreshadowing what his greater Son would do.

Ro.15:3 For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me."

And we are called to do the same thing.

Heb.13:12-13 And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. ¹³ Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.

The command is to go. Find out where Christ’s name is being disgraced, and go there so that you can bear some of that disgrace.

When people blaspheme God at work or school or anywhere else, let’s speak up for Him. How about the next time God is the butt of someone’s joke, or they use His name in vain, instead of just saying, “Please don’t use that kind of language” (as if the problem were just the use of certain taboo words), how about we say something like: “You know – this Jesus Christ that you are speaking against – I love Him. He means more to me than anything in this world. There have been times when I was in excruciating pain and He came and gave me comfort and strength and even joy. He gives me vitality and life every day. He satisfies all the desires and longings of my soul. He guides me and shows me the way to go in life. He takes care of me and provides for me and protects me and fills me with peace. He has made hundreds of amazing promises that are my very life line. And never once has He failed to follow through on a single one of them. He is 100% reliable.

And He has forgiven all my sins. He died for me. He suffered all the wrath of God in my place so my sins could all be forgiven. He has changed me and given me a new heart and put love inside me that wasn’t there before. And He has promised me eternal life filled with ever-increasing joy. I love Him. I deeply love Him. He is the most generous, majestic, awesome, loving, faithful, kind, rich, wise, merciful,

gracious, fearsome, person there is. Nothing is more delightful to me than His presence. And nothing is more satisfying to my soul than His grace. So please don't talk about Him that way."

Not many people are going to be drawn to love the Lord just by you saying, "Please don't use that kind of language around me." But if they can tell that the Lord is a person you deeply love, that will have an impact. It seems like such an obvious thing to say, and yet when the time comes we are dead silent. Our fear of being thought of as strange is just too much for us to handle. "I could never do that. They might frown at me." David and thousands of others throughout history have been willing to defend God's name even if it cost them their lives. But for us, it is probably not going to cost us our lives. If you say all that to a co-worker probably the worst that will happen will be a moment of discomfort. They might laugh at you and walk away, or scowl at you and walk away – or maybe become interested and ask you some questions. But I doubt they will so much as lay a finger on you. And most likely all the pain or discomfort from the whole encounter will be over in a matter of seconds. What cowards we tend to be!

And worse than our cowardice is the reason behind our cowardice. The reason we are cowards is because of a lack of love for God. How would you respond if someone started ripping on your wife? If someone at your work saw her standing next to you and started cursing at her and mocking her and degrading her, would you just laugh along with them? And when your wife asks you later, "Why didn't you stick up for me?" would you say, "Well, you have to admit it would have been a little awkward socially if I had said something." I doubt there is a man in this room who would do that. You would say, "Don't talk about her like that – I love her. She is a wonderful woman. She's smart and beautiful and I'm lucky to be married to her." You see the solution to our cowardice is greater love.

And could I add a corollary to this point? If it dishonors God when I fail to become outraged when His name is denigrated, doesn't it dishonor Him just as much when I fail to become thrilled and enthralled when His name is honored? If I have a passion for God's name, I will not only be outraged when His name is dishonored, but I will be full of joy when His name is honored. I am deeply ashamed to say that there have been many times when I have sat in a church where hundreds of people were gathered for the purpose of honoring the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they were singing His praises, and I was unmoved. God's name was being honored and praised and adored, and I was unhappy because of some trivial little thing I did not like. What kind of cold, dead heart can be unmoved in the presence of the saints of the living God praising His name in unity, simply because of something as trivial as volume or tempo or room temperature or some person's mannerisms? The heart that loves God will be deeply delighted when He is honored.

Love Him enough to boast in Him

So love Him enough to be outraged. And love Him enough to speak up for Him. And one more – love Him enough to boast in Him. Do not misunderstand that – I am not talking about bragging. Bragging is when you try to make people impressed with you. Boasting in God is when you impress people with God. Don't just tell them you love God – tell them the things God is going to do.

David just flat out announces that God is going to give Goliath over, David will cut off his head, and the entire Philistine army will be defeated. That is quite a claim.

1 Ki.20:11 ...One who puts on his armor should not boast like one who takes it off

Usually the time for talking big is after you have already won the battle and you are taking your armor off - not prior to fighting when you are just putting it on. But in this case David talks about as big as you can talk before the fight started. He could do that because God had promised victory.

And we can do that too in areas where God has made promises to us. God has made some amazing promises, and it is a wonderful thing to be able to boast like David did in those promises. For example, when someone is enticed by the pleasures of this world, I can walk right up to them and make some absolutely outlandish claims. I can *assure* them that if they were to experience the presence and smile of God, that would be more enjoyable and thrilling and satisfying to their soul than the most intense pleasure

of this world. I can guarantee them, without any doubt whatsoever, that God's presence can and will give them more joy and delight than the relationship that they think they cannot live without. I can go to the person suffering agony and torment beyond anything I have ever dreamed of, and promise that person that there is, in the heart of God, supplies of grace so powerful that it can produce joy that is even greater than that sorrow. And that grace is accessible to any believer. If some Christian is in a spiritual desert he can give an absolute guarantee that if he wholeheartedly seeks after God he will find Him. I can talk to someone like T, who was facing death from the gang members if she became a Christian, and guarantee her that it will be worth it even if it costs her her life. I can tell the most depressed person on the planet that God is able and willing to give him enough joy to make him shout and sing for joy. I can tell the worst sinner in the world that if he trusts in Jesus Christ his sins are instantly gone and his record before God is as pure as the wind-driven snow. I can promise the most hopeless addict that he can know freedom and victory. I can tell the person with the most complex emotional, psychological, spiritual problem that there is a solution in God's Word. What a thrilling thing to be able to make such boasts. No other adherents to any other religion in the world can make boasts like that about their god.

So, we've seen the attitude of faith and the words of faith, now let's move on to the actions of great faith.

David's actions: Aggressive Faith David's Weapons

³⁷ The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you." ³⁸ Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. ³⁹ David fastened on his sword over the tunic ⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.



This is a picture of the brook David took the stones from.

The slingstones from David's time in that area were a little larger than a baseball. And a sling could launch those at around 100 mph. And David also brings his staff in case he misses with the stones or they hit his shield or armor, then David will take him on hand to hand with a stick. Maybe he will try the old beard-grab technique. I think if I missed with all five stones my next strategy would be to see if I could outrun him. But David is not about to do that – he is literally going for the jugular.

⁴¹ Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David.

No doubt the man Goliath chose to be his armor bearer would have been one big, tough dude. If you are going to carry a shield big enough for Goliath to hide behind you are going to have to be a big guy. The armor bearer's job was to protect the one whose armor he was carrying, and if you remember Jonathan's attack of the Philistine outpost at Micmash you remember that the armor bearer fought along side his charge. I am sure Goliath selected the toughest, most promising warrior in the army to be his apprentice. So David really is facing a two-against one fight. And here they come. This fight is about to begin, and there is no backing out now.

Pace – run to the enemy!

There are 58 verses in the chapter about David and Goliath. And yet the section that describes the actual fight takes up just two verses.

The pace of chapter 17 is very slow – the slowest of the whole book. This is the longest account of a single event in first and second Samuel – lots of detail. But when he describes the fight itself he picks up the pace and goes really fast. Almost no details – just bam, bam, bam and Goliath is down. I think the implication is that the whole thing happened really fast.

48 As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him.

Goliath starts to make a move and right off the bat David starts sprinting.

2 Sam.22:34 [God] makes my feet like the feet of a deer

David showed God to be powerful not just by the fact that he was willing to fight Goliath, but by his eagerness. The sight of the young, unarmored shepherd sprinting toward the giant warrior, was a powerful statement about the power of God.

Keep your eye on the potential fruit, not the obstacles

Great faith is aggressive faith. Some people just think of faith as something that carries them through a hard time. It does do that, but the picture of great faith in Scripture is not generally of someone hunkered down saying, “I’m just going to sit here and trust God until this storm in my life blows over.” Great faith does not just hang on through the pain. Great faith steps out and takes new ground from the enemy. Great faith is so responsive to God’s calling that once the tug of that call is felt that person becomes absolutely unstoppable. Once they know for sure God has called them to do something, nothing can get in their way.

People who place their confidence in themselves quit easily. But the woman or man of faith does not have their eye mainly on the obstacles - they have their eye on the potential fruit. They see the souls that could be saved and the saints that could be built up and the honor that could come to the name of Christ, and they want that harvest so badly that they will persevere through just about any opposition or difficulty. Great faith is aggressive faith. It is Jonathan storming the Philistine garrison with his armor bearer.

It is David sprinting to meet Goliath.

It is Peter taking on a whole Roman cohort by himself.

It is Paul saying, I have to remain in this city longer because there are many who oppose me here and there is a lot of opportunity. (1 Cor.16:9)

It is you, seeing a spiritual need and plowing through any obstacle that tries to prevent you from being a part of the spiritual harvest.

I do not know how the account of David and Goliath strikes you, but when I read it, it makes me want to be a man of great faith. I read about David and I think *I want to do that*. I read about Jonathan storming the garrison and I think, *I want to do something like that*. I know the same God David knew, and He is just as powerful now as ever. I want to do that. I want to be a man of aggressive faith. I don’t want to spend my life just hanging on until the pain of this life blows over. I want to step out against all odds. I want to aggressively cling to God’s promises. I want to do things that will astonish people with God’s power.

I want to be alert to those kinds of commands that call for aggressive action, like taking initiative in reconciling a broken relationship, or jumping into a frightening ministry opportunity, or fearlessly standing strong against any attack on the Lord I love.

Like god like worshipper

Evidently Goliath did not even notice the sling – he just mentions David’s stick. So Goliath starts to make a move and immediately David is zipping around, gets to a place of advantage, then he is moving his arm - is that a sling? And the last thing Goliath ever sees is a 100 mph granite fastball slamming into his face.

⁴⁹ Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.

Like a boxer who gets knocked out, stays on his feet for a second, and then just falls forward and lands on his face.

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.

You have to wonder what Goliath’s armor bearer did. I picture him standing there stunned, and David runs up, looks him in the face and says, “beat it.” The text does not say. All we know is he is not in the picture at all while David kills Goliath with his own sword. It is obscured a little bit in the NIV, but the stone did not kill Goliath. It just knocked him out. David took Goliath’s sword, killed him with it, and then cut off his head.

So Goliath ends up just like Dagon. Remember what Yahweh did to Goliath’s god Dagon back in chapter five? First He knocked him down on his face, then He cut off his head.

The fate of every individual is wrapped up in the fate of whatever they worship. Worship a demon posing as a god and you will end up destroyed right along side that demon. Give your life to the pursuit of money and you will end up just like your money – used, spent, and ultimately gone. Devote your life to your body (beauty and health and physical pleasure) and whatever happens to your body will ultimately be what also happens to your life. (Your body gets sick or broken and your whole life will be down the tubes.) But worship an eternal, delightful God and you will live forever in fullness of delight.

In this age it is not the courage to kill, but the courage to die

So how do we follow David’s example with regard to actions? Should you carry a staff around with you - someone uses some profanity – give him a shot to the head with a hard stick.

How do we apply David’s military victory and courageous, valiant fighting to our lives? David’s military might is a picture of Jesus at His Second Coming, when He will vanquish all his enemies. The application for us is to rejoice in the Son of David who will someday easily defeat evil and wipe it out altogether.

But in this age it is a time of grace and mercy and patience. We do not kill people for blaspheming God now – so no, don’t bring a sling to work. Jesus was clear – just let the tares grow right alongside the wheat. Do not try to figure out which is which and rip the tares out of the ground. Just let them be, and God will sort everyone out at the final harvest on Judgment Day.

The Church age is a time of missionary outreach, not military domination. In this age we do not take the lives of God’s enemies – we lay down our own lives to win them to Christ.

Acts 21:13 I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

That is a key difference between the teaching of the Koran and the teaching of Jesus in the NT. Mohammad says, "Kill the infidels." Jesus says, "Die for the infidels." The Islamic mandate is to go out and impose Islam on people by military force. Jesus' mandate is to lay your life down as a missionary so that pagans can hear the good news.

Conclusion

The farther we get into this study the more obvious it is why fear is such a terrible sin. It causes us to pass up opportunities to glorify God. Fear of being disliked, mocked, laughed at, persecuted, beaten, killed, or any other non-eternal danger, causes us to neglect our gifts, be unfaithful in our callings, miss opportunities to display God's power and goodness, and to ultimately conform to very enemies of our Lord. It is an ugly sin because it is a symptom of lack of faith and lack of love. And It is so absolutely unnecessary. As God's children we have nothing to fear but His displeasure. Keep on learning and relying on more and more of God's promises until you can break free from the chains of fear. Conquer fear by loving God and trusting in his promises.

Benediction: Isa.43:1-4 But now, this is what the LORD says-- he who created you...he who formed you: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. 3 For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior... 4 Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you

Devotionals

David and Goliath (pt.3)

1 Samuel 17 Day 1

The reason David was so eager to dispatch Goliath was because Goliath was blaspheming God. David's action against Goliath is usually thought of as an example of great faith – and rightly so. It was a faith without fear – a faith that did not flinch when threatened. It was an aggressive faith. It was a powerful faith. It was a faith that both honored God and was honored by God. No doubt about it, it was definitely an example of great faith.

But more than that, it was an example of great love. Faith in God and love for God are in many ways two sides of the same coin. Faith is adoring trust, and love is trusting adoration. And so if we want to have faith like David's faith we are going to have to love God like David loved Him. His faith in God was powered by his love for God. His outrage was fueled by his love for God's name.

If you pay close attention to the things David says, his main focus is not Israelite freedom from the oppression of the Philistines. His main thought did not seem to be, "I need to do this so Israel can have freedom." That was secondary. The main thing that drove David was the fact that someone was defying God. Look at the very first thing David says in this account.

26 "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?"

Defying Israel was intolerable because defying God's people is the same thing as defying God. And David is shocked that a reward has to be offered for the task of removing that disgrace – as though the removal of the disgrace itself were not a big enough incentive.

36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God.

45 ... I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

Teach Your servant, dear Lord, to see everything that happens from the perspective of the relationship between that thing and Your name. Give me such love for You that those things that honor Your name bring me great joy. Forgive me Father, for times when Your name has been honored and I failed to rejoice because I was focused on some picky little thing I didn't like. Hundreds of people gathered in Your name, singing Your praises, honoring You – and I and unmoved because the volume or tempo or room temperature or the actions of some individual aren't quite to my liking. What kind of cold, dead heart can be unmoved by Your saints worshipping You in unity simply because of some secondary distraction? Let me not only be outraged when You are dishonored, but also be thrilled when You are honored.

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God whose name so high and holy that It is worthy of the greatest honor.

Promise to trust: He will honor those who honor Him

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Hope, motivation, courage

David and Goliath (pt.3)

1 Samuel 17 Day 2

1 Sam.17:46-47 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."

Bragging is when you try to make people impressed with you. Boasting in God is when you impress people with God. David just flat out announces that God is going to give Goliath over, David will cut off his head, and the entire Philistine army will be defeated. That's quite a claim.

1 Ki.20:11 The king of Israel answered, "Tell him: 'One who puts on his armor should not boast like one who takes it off

In other words, in most cases the time for talking big is after you have already won the battle and you are taking your armor off - not prior to fighting when you are just putting it on. But in this case David talks about as big as you can talk before the fight started. He could do that because God had promised victory. And we can do that too in areas where God has made promises to us.

Dear Father, You have promised amazing things! I love being able to boast like David did in those things. When someone is enticed by the pleasures of this world, I can walk right up to them and make some absolutely outlandish claims. I can assure them that if they were to experience Your presence and smile, that experience would be more enjoyable and thrilling and satisfying to their soul than the most intense pleasure of this world. I can guarantee them, without any doubt whatsoever that Your presence can and will give them more joy and delight than the relationship that they think they can't live without.

I can go to the person suffering agony and torment beyond anything I've ever dreamed of and promise that person that there is, in Your great heart, supplies of grace so powerful that it can produce joy that is even greater than that sorrow. And that grace is accessible to any believer!

If some Christian is in a spiritual desert I can give an absolute guarantee that if he wholeheartedly seeks after You he will find You!

I can talk to someone like T, who was facing death from the gang members if she became a Christian, and guarantee her that it will be worth it even if it costs her her life.

I can tell the most depressed person on the planet that You are able and willing to give him enough joy to make him shout and sing for joy. I can promise the most hopeless addict that he can know freedom and victory. I can tell the person with the most complex emotional, psychological, spiritual problem that there is a solution in God's Word.

I can tell the worst sinner in the world that if he trusts in You his sins are instantly gone and his record before You is as pure as the wind-driven snow.

What a thrilling thing to be able to make such boasts! No other adherents to any other religion in the world can make boasts like that about their god.

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God in Him we can make great boasts

Promise to trust: He will come through on everything He has promised

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Confidence, boldness, courage, delight, faith

David and Goliath (pt.3)

1 Samuel 17 Day 3

Good morning Dear Father,

So often prayer is something I do when I have business to do with You – some sin to confess, a need, a desire... But intimacy in friendship comes from frequency of interaction freely chosen and less occasioned by business. If I call my friend only when I have business to conduct, he is not as close a friend as one I just call or drop by just because I want to be with him. Dear Lord, let my communion with You be like that – throughout the day not just coming to You when something needs to be taken care of, but coming to You just out of a compelling urge to be near You in that moment.

Acts 21:13 I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

1 Cor.15:30-32 And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? ³¹ I die every day-- I mean that, brothers-- just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.

2 Tim.2:8-10 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, ⁹ for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

The Church age is a time of missionary outreach, not military domination. In this age we don't take the lives of God's enemies – we lay down our own lives to win them to Christ. (And we also lay down our lives for the elect – those who are already saved – 2 Tim.2:10). That is a big difference between the teaching of the Koran and the teaching of Jesus in the NT. Mohammad says, "Kill the infidels." Jesus says, "Die for the infidels." The Islamic mandate is to go out and impose Islam on people by military force. Jesus' mandate is to lay your life down as a missionary so that pagans can hear the good news.

I don't know, dear Father, how I would do if I were faced with a situation that called for laying down my life for You? Would I be like Peter at the trial? Or Peter at the arrest? Would I cower in fear of a servant girl and publicly deny You? Or would I be willing to attack an entire Roman cohort by myself? Judging from times in my life that have called for courage I would guess I would likely fail. Dear Father, build courage in Your servant. I don't know what the main way is that You do that – I suppose it involves having to face greater and greater dangers. But whatever it involves dear God, please teach me the courage I will need to never deny You or be unfaithful because of fear of man.

Make it clear to me when I do things I shouldn't do or refrain from things I ought to do because of fear. Make me aware of that so I can begin to learn courage. May I never dishonor Your name because of cowardice dear Lord. My life is Yours, and to die for Your name is the greatest honor I could ever have. You are the God who raises the dead, so those who can do nothing more than kill my body can really do nothing at all. Help Your servant to live like I believe that.

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God who raises the dead

Promise to trust: He will not let any eternal harm befall me

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Joy, safety, confidence, courage, faith

David and Goliath (pt.3)

1 Samuel 17 Day 4

Everything David said identified him with Yahweh, the God that the philistine was mocking. First Goliath defied God. Then David identified himself with Him. When David saw scorn being heaped upon the name of God, he went out to where God was so that the scorn might land on him as well. In doing this David was foreshadowing what his greater Son would do.

Ro.15:2-3 For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me."

And we are called to do the same thing.

Heb.13:12-13 And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. ¹³ Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.

David's attitude was just like Paul's – "I am not ashamed of my God or His Word."

Dear Father, when people blaspheme You, I want to have such love for Your name that I will speak up for You without even thinking twice. Generate in the heart of Your servant enough love to respond to blasphemers verbally and tell them that this Jesus Christ that they are speaking against – I love Him. He means more to me than anything in this world. Give me the presence of mind to explain to them that there have been times when I was in excruciating pain and You came and gave

me comfort and strength and even joy. You give me vitality and life every day. You satisfy all the desires and longings of my soul. You guide me and show me the way to go in life. You take care of me and provide for me and protect me and fill me with peace. Let me love You enough, dear Lord, to announce to the mockers that You have made hundreds of amazing promises that are my very life line. And never once have You failed to follow through on a single one of them. You are 100% reliable.

And let me become most animated when I tell them that this God they are mocking has forgiven all my sins. He died for me. He suffered all the wrath of God in my place so my sins could all be forgiven. He has changed me and given me a new heart and put love inside me that wasn't there before. And He has promised me eternal life filled with ever-increasing joy.

Give me the courage to tell people that I love You – I deeply love You. You are the most generous, majestic, awesome, loving, faithful, kind, rich, wise, merciful, gracious, fearsome, person there is. Nothing is more delightful to me than Your presence. And nothing is more satisfying to my soul than Your grace.

And Lord, let me not just say those words, but let the emotions of love for Your name be so powerful that they can tell this is coming from my love for a person rather than mere commitment to an ideology or religious system. Oh Lord, my love for You is so pathetically, sinfully weak. Help Your servant strengthen it dear God, that I might love You as I ought. Forgive me for how little I love You.

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God who is worthy of the highest boasting

Promise to trust: He will reward me for anything I suffer in His name.

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Joy, confidence, courage, faith, outspoken love for Him

David and Goliath (pt.3)

1 Samuel 17 Day 5

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.

David took Goliath's sword, killed him with it, and then cut off his head. So Goliath ends up just like Dagon. The fate of every individual is wrapped up in the fate of whatever they worship. Worship a demon posing as a god and you'll end up destroyed right along side that demon. Give your life to the pursuit of money and you will end up just like your money – used, spent, and ultimately gone. Devote your life to your body (beauty and health and physical pleasure) and whatever happens to your body will ultimately be what also happens to your life. (Your body gets sick or broken and your whole life will be down the tubes.) But worship an eternal, delightful God and you will live forever in fullness of delight.

The forces that act on me are so much bigger than me I am like a leaf in the current of a raging river. Time is utterly out of my control. The people whose decision affect me are outside my control. The weather, my health, accidents, coincidences, death, heaven and hell, my own sinfulness, Judgment Day – all these are not only outside my control, they are outside the control of the most powerful beings in existence all put together. No one but You, dear Lord, could ever promise to protect me.

But You have total power over all those things. It is less difficult for You to control all those things perfectly, simultaneously, than it is for me to think a thought. Nothing threatens You. Nothing ever will or ever could. You are infinitely more powerful than the next most powerful thing, and You

will exist forever unchanged from the way You are now, since You cannot improve or decline. And You will not only exist forever but You will exist in eternal blessedness – with unbounded, infinite, unthreatened joy in Your own glory.

And the fate of an individual is all wrapped up in the fate of His God. My eternal destiny should be eternal torment, but instead it will be eternal joy with You! Oh thank You dear Lord! Any suffering I experience now because of Your name is nothing compared to the reward it will bring me. And even if there were no reward at all it would be more than worth it.

Thank You, dear God, that I never have to concern myself with the possibility that my God will not be powerful enough to deliver on all His promises – promises infinitely greater than all those of all the other religions put together (and the gods of those religions aren't even powerful enough to deliver all the time even on those infinitely smaller promises!). It is so good, dear Lord, to be Your son!!!

Attribute to behold, desire, experience & enjoy: The God whose fate is one worth sharing!

Promise to trust: I will live forever with Him in eternal blessedness

What will result if I experience this attribute today: Joy, hope, confidence, passion for the lost