

Courageous Living
Finding Daily Courage
Part 3

Intro: Everyone loves to hear stories of courage. This is why so many of us like to watch movies. In almost every movie there is someone being courageous; someone overcoming fear; someone doing something noble despite the risk. Movies wouldn't make much money if courage wasn't a theme somewhere in the movie.

One of the great qualities of the Bible is that it is filled with stories of people who did courageous things. It is filled with people who had the choice between living in fear or choosing courage. 2 weeks ago we discovered that Biblical courage is rooted in our convictions about God. We can have courage because of God's presence / God's power / and God's purposes. Today, we're going to look at how do we live courageously based upon these truths. In order to do this, we need to look at a story of courage. For many of you, this is a very familiar story. It was one of my kid's favorite stories.

- **Summarize the story. I Sam. 17** David Vs Goliath.
- How do we live courageously?

1. Live In A Manner Knowing Who You Represent

I Sam. 17:45-47 "David replied to the Philistine, "You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, **but I come to you in the name of the LORD of Heaven's Armies—the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.** ⁴⁶ **Today the LORD will conquer you, and I will kill you and cut off your head. And then I will give the dead bodies of your men to the birds and wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel!** ⁴⁷ *And everyone assembled here will know that the LORD rescues his people, but not with sword and spear. This is the LORD's battle, and he will give you to us!" (NLT)*

- David's courage came from knowing who he represented. He was not representing himself, King Saul or the nation of Israel. He stood before Goliath as a representative of the Lord of Heaven's armies. This is why he said; "I come to you in the name..."
- Why is this so important in regards to courage? When you know you are representing someone it gives you authority. David knew he had authority in this situation that came from God.
 - When I was in grade school, some of my teachers would allow me to do errands for them (get supplies / copies / extra handouts / get something from the library) But in order to move freely through the hallways, I would need the hall pass. The hall pass gave me authority. (explain) Knowing I was representing my teacher gave me courage.

- The same is true with us. If we think we are living and representing only ourselves, we're going to feel a lot of anxiety. It would be like living life without a hall pass. You're moving through life afraid.
- The truth is that we represent God in this world. We do not live for ourselves we live for Him. We get to live as His ambassadors in this life.

II Cor. 5:18-20 "And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. ¹⁹For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. ²⁰So we are Christ's ambassadors..." (NLT)

- An ambassador has authority. An ambassador has power. An ambassador has a right to be in a foreign place representing the interests of the country He is from.
- Therefore, when fear begins to say you have no right to be doing what you're doing, going where you're going. When you hear fear telling you to get back where you belong, it's time to show fear the hall pass. "Ambassador for Christ!"
- We attack the obstacles in this life "in the name of Jesus". "I come against you in the name..." We must live in a manner knowing who we represent.

2. Move Towards The Obstacle Creating Fear

I Sam. 17:48 "As Goliath moved closer to attack, David quickly ran out to meet him." (NLT)

- David didn't even wait for Goliath and his armor bearer to get to him. He didn't take a defensive position. He didn't wait behind a rock, shrub or tree for cover. He ran towards the battle.
- What a great example of how to live courageously. Move towards the very thing that is causing us fear. Move in the direction of the thing that makes you uncomfortable. Don't hide from it. Don't take up a defensive position trying to protect yourself. Move ahead right at it.
- I know this may sound a bit crazy to some of you, but unless you move in the very direction of the thing you fear you will never conquer it. That fear will forever be a part of your life. That fear will forever dominate your life.
- Story of signing a lease to rent this building. This was a huge faith test for us as a church. This is why we signed a lease. We could of allowed the size of the project or the cost of a lease to paralyze us. OR...we can move right at it! You do not conquer giants doing nothing!
- There's nothing to be ashamed of when we experience fear. There's nothing wrong with being afraid of something. This gives us the opportunity to choose courage. It gives us the chance to run right at it.
- I think of all the things that I am no longer fearful about. Fear no longer is something that is a major part of my life. I was a farm kid from Molalla. My world was very, very small. Because my world and experiences were so limited, I was fearful of much.
 - I was fearful to go to college
 - I was fearful of public speaking

- I was fearful to be a pastor
 - I was fearful of what others thought of me
 - I was fearful to drive in Mexico the first time
 - I was fearful to start a church
 - I was fearful when we took over the Adult Center
 - I have had my moments of anxiety over the purchase and remodel of this building.
- It has become a principal of my life that whatever I am uncomfortable and fearful of doing, I need to move right at it. This is what living courageously looks like. I realize this looks like insanity to many people. BUT, this is how you conquer fear!
 - But when we move towards our fear, it gives God the opportunity to do something in us and through us. It gives God the opportunity to do something miraculous. Courage is really just faith in action. Courage is what faith looks like. When we live courageously, our faith grows. It is courageous faith that unleashes power.
 - Where do you need to take some steps towards the very thing you're fearful of? What giant have you been allowing to taunt you and the God you serve? Time to move right at it!

3. Utilize What God Has Entrusted To You

I Sam. 17:49 "Reaching into his shepherd's bag and taking out a stone, he hurled it with his sling and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank in, and Goliath stumbled and fell face down on the ground." (NLT)

- David simply used what God had already given him. David didn't try to use Saul's armor or weapons. He used what was familiar to him...a sling and a stone. When God is with you, even a rock can become a laser guided missile.
- So often we take assessment of our resources in view of the obstacle and we conclude victory is impossible. Victory just doesn't add up on the spreadsheet. How can a teenage shepherd boy with a rock and a sling take on an experienced giant with armor, sword and spear? Impossible!
- The fact was that David already had everything he needed for victory. He had all the weaponry necessary to defeat the giant. If he would simply act in faith and use what God had already given him, the victory was assured.
- How often do we take assessment of our situation in light of our resources and conclude victory is impossible? We don't think we have enough resources / talent / skill / experience / money.
- The truth is that we have everything we need for victory already. God doesn't ask us to make courageous decisions if we didn't already have all we need. He doesn't lead us into battle only for us to discover it wasn't enough.
- In 2016 we needed one million dollars for a down payment to purchase the entire strip mall and get the True Value area remodeled. We believed that everything we needed to accomplish this goal and slay this giant was already here.

- BUT...some people were so intimidated by this goal they refused to even try. They conclude their part doesn't matter. Some conclude a congregation like ours can't do this. We only have a sling and a stone. We're only Molalla people. Some left the church.
- How quickly we forget that God has a habit of multiplying what we give to Him in obedience no matter how small or insignificant. (Remember the loaves and fish?) The issue is giving Him what we do have not focusing on what we don't have.
- Slaying giants is about God getting the credit and glory. How does He get the credit if we look at our resources and can do it ourselves? How does He get the glory in our community if what He asks us to do doesn't require courage?
- Do you realize that our faith has the potential of igniting faith in others? How many other believers in Jesus are paralyzed by fear just like the rest of Israel's army listening to Goliath every day? One act of courage unleashed faith to a nation! What can ours do in a community? Let's continue to find out? Let's use simply what we have and watch God!

4. Experience Triumph That As A Testimony To God

I Sam. 17:50 "So David triumphed over the Philistine with only a sling and a stone..." (NLT)

- Why does God like to do the impossible through unlikely people? David knew the answer to this question before he ever faced Goliath.

I Sam. 17:46-47 "...and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel! ⁴⁷And everyone assembled here will know that the LORD rescues his people, but not with sword and spear. This is the LORD's battle..." (NLT)

- This is the reason! So the world will know. So people recognize there is a God in Molalla and He is not concerned with the physical. He is a God who fights for us, defends us, provides for us and does the miraculous.
- It is only when we live courageously that God is seen in this world. People of this world do not see Him when the people of God act like cowards! If we want the world to know God the church is going to have to start living courageously. If we want Molalla to see God then we are going to have to live courageously. This is the result of courage.
- Victory is the result of...
 - Courageous giving – when God's people finally begin using their financial resources for advancing the Kingdom of God. When God's people stop thinking as if they live in scarcity and start believing they are sons and daughters of the King! Scarcity thinking =believing you never have enough. Mental poverty.
 - Courageous serving – When living for myself is no longer my priority. I now live to serve the purposes of God. I courageously get involved.
 - Courageous obedience – I begin obeying the hard stuff – forgiveness, compassion, loving relationships. I stop picking and choosing.
 - Courageous growth- I am going to stop avoiding things that make me uncomfortable and choose to grow. Take risks.

- Courageous trust – We trust God for things bigger than ourselves and bigger than our current resources. Sometimes, a rock and a sling is all we need if this is all we got!

Notice the result of living this way.

II Cor. 4:7 “We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.” (NLT)

- If we do not live courageously for God how are people to see His reality? God’s great power only becomes our reality as we live courageously. We can talk about how we want to see Molalla transformed all we want. BUT, Molalla will not see this great power of God until we live courageously first.
- God is ready to use the simple things we have. Are we ready to choose courage?

Let’s make some choices today.

- Choose to live in a manner knowing who you represent.
- Choose to move towards obstacles creating fear.
- Choose to utilize what God has entrusted to you.
- Choose to experience triumph that will give God all the glory.