

LESSONS FROM DAVID AND GOLIATH—THE REWARDS FOR EFFECTIVELY USING OUR “SLING”

Over the last couple of weeks, we’ve been looking at the historical account of a *literal, physical battle* between the teenage boy **David**—and the giant champion of the Philistine army, **Goliath**. *Why?* Because there are **truths taught** in this account that are essential for us to know in our *never-ending spiritual battle* against Satan, sin, and our own sin nature!

Last week, we looked at **our responsibility** to use the resources available to us in our spiritual battle. In David’s fight against Goliath, he wasn’t just a **spectator of** the battle—he was an active **participant in** the battle and **used the resources** available to him.

What were **David’s** resources; what were his weapons? A sling...and 5 stones...and his shepherd’s staff...and a pouch to put the 4 extra stones in. But even though David’s battle was a **physical** battle, his most “valuable resource” was not a **physical weapon!** His most valuable resource was **God Himself!**

David declared to Goliath—and to all those who could hear him—that **“the battle is the Lord’s!”** What did **he mean** by that? That **God was the One who** decided the outcome of battles—**not weapons or men!** And David unashamedly acknowledged **that the Lord** was the One who **killed the lion and the bear**—and the Lord would also be the One to **kill Goliath!**

And just as **God** was David’s most valuable resource in his physical battle, **God** is our most “valuable resource” in our spiritual battle! And He wants us to “use” Him! Not in a **self-pleasing, self-serving**, “genie in a bottle kind of way,” but in a **good and God-honoring** way! Does God **really want us** to “use” Him? **Yes**, He does!

I’m going to read for you again some of the verses I gave you last week:

II Chronicles 16:9a “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to **shew Himself strong** in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect [whole-heartedly devoted] toward Him.”

What is God looking for? **What** is God “scanning the earth for?” Someone whose heart is **whole-heartedly devoted** to Him. **Why?** So He can **show Himself strong** in their behalf! And that’s exactly what God did for David, isn’t it?

Psalms 50:15 “And **call upon me** in the day of trouble: **I will deliver thee**, and thou shalt glorify me.”

Why does God want us to call upon Him in the day of trouble? **So He can deliver us**—and we can glorify—meaning **praise and thank** Him!

Hebrews 4:16 “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Why does God want us to come boldly to the throne of grace?

That we may obtain—that we may get from God—**mercy and grace** to help in time of need!

So based on what God tells us about Himself and His willingness to be “used” by us, I do not believe **Spurgeon** was wrong when he wrote: “There is **nothing Christ dislikes more** than for His people to make a show-thing of Him, **and not to use Him**. **He loves to be employed by us....** Even our Lord Jesus is given to us **for our present use**. Thou dost not **make use of Christ** as thou oughtest to do.” (*Streams* 1, August 12th).

What happens when we “employ”—when we “use” Christ as we ought? What are the **blessings**—what are **the rewards**—that are ours when we do that? That is what we are going to be looking at this morning.

Take your Bibles and turn once again to I Samuel 17. So what are the rewards for effectively “using” God—and His Word—in our spiritual battles? There are probably more, but I’m going to share with you **three**.

First—and the most obvious—is...**1. Giants will be slain—and spiritual battles will be won!**

We see that in verses 49-51, please follow along as I read these three verses. But David's was a **literal, physical** battle—and ours is a **spiritual** battle. What will **spiritual victories** look like for us?

Depends on who and what **our giants are**, right?

A. There is the "giant" Satan

Are we in a battle with Satan? Yes; we are—and he is certainly a "giant" compared to us! He is "bigger," smarter, and stronger—and we **cannot defeat him** in our own strength or wisdom! But **God the Holy Spirit can** because "greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world!"

Can we **defeat and kill Satan once and for all** like David killed Goliath? No; but we can **put him on the run** the way Jesus did! Notice the verses I have for you on your outline from **James 4:6-7** "But He giveth more grace. Wherefore He saith, God resisteth the proud, but **giveth grace** unto the humble. ⁷ **Submit yourselves** therefore to God. **Resist the devil**, and he will flee from you."

With those verses in mind, I want you to mark your spot here in I Samuel 17 and turn to Matthew 4 where we have the account of **Jesus being tempted** by Satan. **Countless sermons** have been preached from this passage, and I certainly can't do it justice in the few minutes I'm going to spend on it, but I want you to see for yourself how Jesus handled Satan's temptation.

Notice what it says in verses 1-3. Satan came to Jesus when Jesus **was hungry**—and tempted Jesus in what Satan thought would be an area of weakness. Jesus was naturally hungry—He had a real body, just like ours—and it was **not wrong** for Jesus to want to eat. And He certainly **had the ability** to change stones into bread!

But **Jesus was humble**—like it says **we are to be** in James 4:6—and had **submitted Himself to doing the will of the Father** like it says in the first part of James 4:7. He would only turn stones into bread if **God the Father** wanted Him to—but **Satan is not God the Father!** So Jesus **said "NO"**—He resisted the devil—and did so by **quoting** the Word of God!

And that is the way we can defeat Satan **in our lives!** If you are a **child of God**, Satan is your enemy. He is "as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking to **devour** you." He wants you to sin—he wants you to choose **your** way over **God's** way—but he can be resisted by using the Word of God!

But how—in a practical way—do we use God's Word to resist temptation? Does "waving a Bible"—or simply **quoting a verse** from it—really put Satan **"on the run?"** **How—in a practical way**—does having God's Word hidden in our heart—meaning memorized—help us not sin against God like it says in Psalm 119:11?

Here are some ways reading and studying and memorizing will help us not sin against God.

1) It points out what sin is. **God decides** what sin is—**not us** as individuals or **society** as a whole. As we read God's Word, we learn what **pleases** God—and what **displeases** Him. Not exactly a news flash, is it?

2) God uses it to promote change in our desires. We've seen that before in **Phil 2:13** "For it is **God which worketh in you** both to will [to desire] and to do [obey] of His good pleasure." **II Corinthians 3:18** reminds us that as we behold God in His Word, we are changed—we are transformed—"from glory to glory"—from one stage of growth to another—"even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

3) It provides reminders. What kind of reminders? Things like:

--Our **inability to fight sin** in our own strength. **Romans 7:19** "For the good that I would [that I desire] I do not: but the evil which I would not [desire not to do], that I do."

--**That God provides a way of escape** **I Corinthians 10:13** "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

--That **our role** in the battle is to **take our thoughts captive** to the obedience of Christ (**II Cor 10:5**).

4) It persuades us of God's promises (like **Phil 4:13**; **II Cor 12:9-10**; and **II Peter 1:3-4**).

5) It prompts us to pray. **Psalm 139:23-24** "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

What happens when we use God's Word in this way to resist Satan's temptation to sin? **Luke 4:13**—a parallel passage to Matthew 4—says, "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, **he departed from Him** [Jesus] for a season."

So we can have victory in our battle with Satan when we use God's Word to resist him! But **Satan** is not the only giant **God can defeat for us** in our spiritual battle.

Second, B. There is the "giant" of sin in the world

What do I mean by the "sin in the world"? There are **evils in the world that God hates**, evils like abortion... child-trafficking...the LGBTQ+ movement... pornography... same-sex unions, and the transgender movement. And we—as God's people—are to **hate the things that God hates!** **Ps 97:10a** "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil."

But God calls us to **do more than hate** these things, we are to **fight against them**—not sit **helplessly on the sidelines** doing nothing! **Ephesians 5:11** "And have no fellowship **with the unfruitful works of darkness**, but rather **reprove them**." The word "reprove" here means to rebuke...to bring to light...to expose. So just **being non-participants** when it comes to evil **is not enough**—we need to be **speaking out against it** and doing what we can to **expose it and stop it!**

Will any of these evils—**like abortion**—be **totally eliminated** from the world? **Not until** we have a **new heaven and a new earth!** But...God calls us to fight against them anyway!

And it is encouraging when you see **progress being made**—like **abortion clinics** being closed down... and **gay pride flags** being taken down...and **men in women's sports** having their "records" taken down!

But we must remember these are **spiritual battles** that must be fought in a **spiritual** way. God does not call us to **kill** abortion doctors—or **bomb** abortion clinics! We need to speak **up**...and speak **out**...and **educate**, but most importantly **we need to pray!**

Third, C. There is the "giant" of sin in our nature

Anyone have a sin nature **besides me?** We all do, don't we? **Galatians 5:17** "For the **flesh [sin nature]** lusteth against [fights against] the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh [sin nature]: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

I know I've mentioned this before, but I believe we give **Satan** too much **credit**—or too much **blame**—when it comes to **why** we sin. To say, "**The devil made me do it**" is simply **not true**—we sin because **we want to** sin! We sin because we have a nature within us that **wants to please us**—and doesn't care if we **displease God!** But if we are a **child of God**, we **also have within us** the Holy Spirit who wants us to **please God**—and wants us to choose **God's way** over our own way.

So how—in a practical way—can we defeat a sinful habit that seems to be "ingrained" in our sin nature? By using the steps we looked at earlier! Here's an example of what that might look like.

Suppose while reading the Bible, you come across **Ephesians 4:29** "**Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth**, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Or maybe **James 3:10** "Out of the same mouth **proceedeth blessing and cursing**. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."

And as you read these verses, God speaks to you about **your** language. Maybe you are in the habit of **swearing**—or maybe it is a habit of "polite" swearing where you use a different word instead of a swear word.

So the sin has been pointed out—and in your heart you have a desire to change the way you speak because the Holy Spirit has been working on you.

You then recognize—and admit to God—that you need **His help** to defeat this "giant" in your life. You also know that He has provided a way to escape—and that He has promised that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. And so you find a verse—like **Psalms 19:14**—that says, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

So you memorize that verse—and pray as you recite that verse—and God changes the way you talk!

And you can do that with any sin God points out! But **one of the keys** is having a verse **in your mind** that God the Holy Spirit will **bring to your mind** when you need it. And that is how hiding God's Word in our heart helps us to not sin against Him!

Take your Bibles now and let's turn back to I Samuel 17. You already know from your handout that this is a very front-heavy outline—meaning a lot more time was spent on point **one** than I'm going to spend on points two and three. Why? Because I really felt it was important not just to tell you that **you can have victory** in your battles with Satan—I also wanted to show you how!

So what are **the blessings**—what are **the rewards**—for effectively “using” God—and His Word—in our spiritual battles? **First**, giants will be slain—and spiritual battles will be won!

Second, **2. Past victories encourage our faith in present battles**

We see that in David's life, don't we? Notice what it says in verses 34-37. David is “oozing” with confidence that he **would not lose this battle** with Goliath! **Why?** Was he being **arrogant and proud**? Was he **counting on his skill** as a stone “slinger”? **No!** David was simply **counting on God** to deliver him!

Why did he have faith that that would happen? Because God had done it before! And it is noteworthy that David wasn't just counting on being **delivered**—he was counting on **defeating** the giant by **decapitating** him! I realize that may be a bit dramatic, but that is what David said in verse 46! Notice what it says.

So just as **past victories** encouraged **David's faith** in his battle with Goliath, past victories where God worked **for** us...and **in** us... and **through** us will **encourage our faith** in whatever present battle we find ourselves in! But we need to be **skilled in using our “sling”**—the Word of God—at the same time we are **counting on God** to give the victory!

There's a **third** blessing we see in this account, and it is this...

3. God's use of you will be an encouragement to others

We see that in verses 51-53. Were the men of Israel **excited about David's** defeat of Goliath? They certainly were! But they didn't just **cheer David**—they got in the fight and **chased the Philistines!** And let's not forget that these were the exact same men who fled from Goliath and “were sore afraid,” the Bible says in verse 24.

Will victories in our spiritual battles **be an encouragement** to others? They certainly will be! In I Peter 4:4, Peter reminds those that he is writing to that when you **stop doing the things you used to do**, some people will think **it strange because of the change** that has taken place in you!

But others will want to know **how and why** we've changed...or how we've **gotten victory** over a sinful habit that we have had in the past. And our victory will **encourage them** that they, too, can have victory! **Why?** Because the same God can use His Word **in their lives** the same way He used it **in yours!**

But we need to have victories, don't we? And we won't have victories if we **depend on us and our strength!** Instead, we need to trust in God and His strength!

When we do that, victories will come. And—as vs 47 says—those around us will know “that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD's.”

So what does God want you to do with what you heard this morning?

1) First, how convinced of you are your need for God? We have a sin nature that is bent on serving us—and the very fact that we **don't want to know what God** says about getting into **His heaven** is proof that we have a sin nature! No one—in heaven—will say, “I did it my way!” Do you have Christ?

2) Second, how important is God's Word to you? Is it as important to you as David's sling was to him?

It should be! Why? Because it is the main weapon we have in our spiritual battle against Satan, sin, and our sin nature!