

The Discipleship Project-Summer 2021

Series 3: Victorious

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The Head of Goliath

Series Big Idea

Because our battles belong to the Lord, we must trust God to bring victory.

Lesson Big Idea

Because our battles belong to the Lord, we must trust God to guide our hands.

FOUNDATION

Scripture Focus: I Samuel 17:47 (PPT)

David absently rested his hand on the sling in his pouch. A smile spread across his lips as he thought, *You never know when you'll meet up with a lion or a bear.* Even now he was amazed that he had been able to defeat both wild beasts with no harm to his flock. He turned his thoughts toward God, worshiping Him for those victories as he headed for the Valley of Elah, where his older brothers were fighting in a battle against the Philistines. With food and supplies in his backpack, David intended to bring provisions to his brothers and news of the battle back to his father.

As David came close to the battleground, he searched for his brothers. Suddenly a booming voice echoed through the valley. David stopped in his tracks. What was that? Was someone taunting them? David turned and stood on his tiptoes trying to get a good look at the heathen who defied the army of Israel. David asked the soldiers around him who was taunting them and how dare he insult the armies of the living God. The soldiers began to fill him in on the details of the contest.

The champion of the Philistines, Goliath, obviously chosen for his gigantic stature and brawny build, stomped into the midst of the valley and called for Israel to send a man to fight him. He mocked, defied, and insulted the Israelites. King Saul was frantic; no one in his army had the courage to come forward against such a foe. As an incentive the king offered great riches and the hand of his daughter in marriage to the man who would kill this giant. Still no one volunteered.

When David's oldest brother, Eliab, saw David inquiring about the reward for such a reckless feat, Eliab grabbed David by the arm and led him away. "What are you doing here? Shouldn't you be home taking care of the sheep? This is a dangerous place. I know you just came out here to see some action."

David replied, "What have I done? Can't you see that I'm here for a reason?"

David jerked free of his brother's grasp. Before Eliab could stop him, David boldly addressed others nearby. "Why are we just letting this heathen insult us? Why doesn't someone go down there and silence him?" Before long, David had volunteered for the fight and was committed to answer Goliath's challenge.

FRAME

Just as David faced the giant, we face battles in our lives that can seem insurmountable. (PPT) When a situation looms up like a mountain in our lives, what should we do? The only alternative is to scale the situation, tunnel through it, or climb over it. In the midst of a battle, we must decide whether we will continue to fight or give up.

- **What are some battles you have faced that seemed insurmountable?**

One of the greatest battles we face is temptation. (PPT) We all fight it. Temptation is part of being human. The Bible assures us that temptation will come. It is inevitable.

However, temptation is not sin. Succumbing to the temptation is what causes us to sin. The action that temptation requires is what defeats us. We all struggle with something that tempts us to sin. The Word of God puts all temptation into three categories: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

First John 2:16 (PPT) says, “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (KJV).

Some struggle with the lust of the flesh. This temptation appeals to the desires of the flesh, such as sex, gluttony, self-glorification, or anything that satisfies the flesh.

The lust of the eyes can be things like viewing pornography, coveting another’s possessions, or dealing with materialism—a “keep up with the Joneses” attitude.

The pride of life can be subtle and undetectable at first. This temptation includes arrogance or craving position, superiority, or power over another. The pride of life may engender prejudice, seeking to exalt oneself over someone else, subjecting someone to slavery, or exploiting someone. We may look at these acts as disgusting, but the pride of life is a seed. When left unattended, this seed will mature and grow into ugly attitudes and actions that not only hurt us but could destroy others as well.

- **Which category of temptation from I John 2:16 do you think people deal with most in today’s world?**

Spiritual warfare is real, (PPT) but we should not look for a devil hiding behind every bush. We need to be aware of the power of the enemy, but we also need to decipher what is a battle and what is our own fear of the unknown. Satan is a fallen angel. He has no more power than any other angel God created. Satan’s favorite ploy is making us think he is more powerful than he really is. He is the perfect picture of pride, attempting to exalt and promote himself above God Almighty. Satan had the gall to challenge Jesus Christ in the wilderness and offer Jesus things He already possessed. If Satan would try to tempt Jesus, the very manifestation of God, how much more will he seek to find a way to tempt us? And as an aside, Satan lost that battle with Jesus. (See Luke 4:1–13.)

The devil is walking around seeking those he can devour (I Peter 5:8). He loves to prey on the weak and vulnerable. When we encounter a spirit of evil, it is from the actions and commands of Lucifer himself. When we compare the truth with his lies, it is evident he tries to make us think he is as powerful as God. God is the only one who is omnipotent (all powerful), omnipresent (everywhere), and omniscient (all knowing). The devil would love to have these attributes, but he never will.

- **In response to Satan’s limits, can you name some eternal attributes of God that prove He is limitless?**

Another great battle we may have to endure is **disease in the body.** (PPT) Many times this battle is a daily struggle just to get out of bed and preserve some normalcy in life. We fight the desire to give up. We fight for our families. We fight to keep going for our loved ones. We fight the fear of what might happen if this disease ends this life. The fight of disease is a real battle, a hard battle, and a seemingly unending battle.

Another battle we fight is **relationship disappointments,** (PPT) which may result in a broken home, estranged children, or other close friendships that fall along the wayside. Often we do not understand why these things happened, and we tend to blame ourselves. As a result we fight guilt, depression, self-loathing, and grief. When broken relationships cause our children or spouse to be estranged from us, the heartbreak of being separated from the ones we love is the greatest disappointment.

The **fear of death** (PPT) is another battle we may have to fight. Jesus came to defeat death. Satan is not managing that department any longer. Jesus earned the right to supersede death when He overcame it through the Resurrection. But the fear of death is a literal battle for those who have encountered a brush with the abrupt finality of death.

- **Has someone close to you died? How did this experience affect your concept of death?**

Before too long, word reached King Saul. David told the king that no one should be afraid of that heathen. With that David offered to fight the giant. The king was visibly astonished that a young inexperienced man such as David would be willing to fight an enemy who had been in the army for years. David told the king about the lion and the bear he had killed. With great confidence David declared that the Lord, who delivered him from the paw of the lion and the bear, would deliver him from the hand of this Philistine (I Samuel 17:37). David's confidence came from past victories God had given him. We must not forget the past victories we know came from the Lord.

Our spiritual battles are not with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers. (PPT) "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12, KJV). (PPT) David faced a battle against another human being. Though some of our earthly conflicts are with flesh and blood, we also wage spiritual battles.

Saul was keenly aware David was facing a formidable enemy. Goliath was experienced, strong, and big. He had the upper hand in the situation. Saul's offer to David of his armor was a kind gesture to protect David. Saul insisted David put the armor on, but David was unable to enter the battle confidently with Saul's untried protection. Another's armor, however sincerely offered, is not going to be tailored to our needs. **We must depend upon the strength of the Lord to give us victory.** (PPT) Saul may have had faith in his armor because it had served him in battle, but to David the armor was new and unfamiliar.

As David lumbered around in the king's armor, it felt heavy and cumbersome. He had never worn armor, and it is doubtful he had carried a sword before this moment. David was unaccustomed to the protocol of the army, but he was familiar with the protection of his God.

We must depend on our own faith experiences with God to face the battle. (PPT) Though grateful for the king's offer, David humbly reminded the king that God had given David the victory over the lion and the bear. He assured the king that God would give him the victory over a giant. He referred back to his past victories and based his hope on God's empowerment from experience. David could not enter the battle with untried protection. He relied on his past victories and God's protection to confidently face the giant. All he needed was a visual of the dead lion and the lifeless bear to fight this battle. David took off the armor and went looking for five smooth stones from the brook.

The word of our testimony increases our faith. (PPT) We face each challenge with courage because of our past victories. If God did it once, He will do it again. As we face the greatest battles of our lives, we must remember that God's protection gives us sure confidence. God's promise to never leave us or forsake us is more dependable than any other defense (Hebrews 13:5).

With his sling in hand, David confidently headed toward the Philistine because David knew God was with him. Goliath scoffed at David, calling him a dog for coming to a battle with no sword or spear. When Goliath started cursing David in the name of his false gods, David had all he could take. He yelled out to the giant, comparing the giant's fine weapons against the power of the name of the Lord. David accused Goliath of defying his God and insulting his children. Goliath was doomed. The Lord would deliver Goliath into David's hand. David confidently continued his angry tirade. "I will strike you down and cut off your head. . . . that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (I Samuel 17:46, ESV). With a wide sweep of his arms, David made his last resounding statement before attacking the enemy. He assured Goliath that everyone standing there would know that David did not need a sword or a spear because the battle was the Lord's. The Lord was going to deliver Goliath into the hands of the Israelites (I Samuel 17:47).

God has given us the tools we need to fight. (PPT) God has equipped us with armor for our spiritual protection (Ephesians 6:14–17). He has given us what we need to fight against powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places. God's armor consists of two components—defensive and offensive. Defensive tools protect us against the enemy. This is very important to help us survive the battle. Offensive tools are weapons to help us fight. With no offensive weapons, we would be helpless, even with our armor on.

The offensive tool we have been given is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. (PPT) The Word of God is the most effective weapon against the enemy of our soul. It is alive. It cuts between the soul and spirit. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires (Hebrews 4:12). No other weapon can compare to this one.

Jesus used the sword of the Spirit to win a battle against the devil. Jesus quoted the Word of God to the devil during an encounter with him in the wilderness. The Word is our greatest weapon. It is more powerful than any of our words. When we speak God's Word, we are pulling from all the forces of eternity. God's Word will stop the enemy, bind the forces of evil, and release the captives and set them free. David owned a sword, but it was not one he pulled out of a sheath. It was his promise from the God of his fathers that gave him the courage to face this battle.

Just as David confidently ran toward Goliath without fear, we must not be afraid. (PPT) No matter the area in which we struggle, we have a secret weapon in our possession. If we put our trust in the Lord—knowing He fights for us—we can face our battles head on. Our secret weapon is the Holy Spirit living in us. David faced the giant with confidence because God had proven to David in the past that He would come through for him. We too can have that confidence in a faithful God.

With Goliath before him, David began running toward the giant. David placed his hand in his pouch, took out a small stone, and put it in his sling. Around and around it went. When he let go, the stone hit the spot. God propelled that small piece of granite with mighty force. The force of the stone was so powerful that when it hit the giant in the forehead, the giant fell backward, vibrating the ground beneath David's feet. David ran as fast as he could, grabbed the giant's sword, and cut off the giant's head in one fell swoop of the weapon. Goliath's own sword was his demise. In the hand of David, God used the enemy's weapon against him. When we trust God, He will guide our hands in battle.

- **What are some practical ways God uses the enemy's weapons against him?**

As the Philistine army ran in fear, the Israelites cheered in victory. The battle was won. Goliath's head was a trophy of God's faithfulness to His children. God had delivered Goliath into the hands of the Israelites, just as David had prophesied.

FINISH

France and Britain declared war on Germany during Hitler's aggressive campaign. Winston Churchill became Britain's prime minister just before war broke out. In his first speech as prime minister, Churchill said, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat." Little did he know, that was exactly what

the war would require. In July of 1940, German planes began bombing with such formidable force that the British people were sure to be destroyed. The air raids pummeled Britain for three months. Surely the future looked grim.

In an effort to keep the spirits of the British people high, Churchill gave stirring speeches on the radio and in Parliament. He persuaded the United States to provide war supplies and planes to the Allies. After five long years, Germany finally surrendered in 1945. During the war Winston Churchill earned the name British Bulldog with his never-give-up attitude and his ability to help others rally when all seemed lost (www.history.com).

In 1939 before the war broke out, a slogan became popular to bolster the people's morale during the dark days ahead. The British government printed posters of the slogan "Keep Calm and Carry On." However, they were never distributed and eventually only a handful survived (www.businessinsider.com).

Years later, one of the flyers was discovered in a bookstore in England. The image became iconic of the twentieth century. Although the words did not originate with Winston Churchill, the famous World War II poster "Keep Calm and Carry On" has been associated with his spirit and leadership during the war (www.winstonchurchill.org).

David's confidence in his God was extraordinary. It was as if he walked into the camp of Israel with a large poster that said, *Keep Calm and Carry On*. He couldn't understand why the children of God were so afraid of Goliath, nor could he fathom the fact that they had no clue who was fighting for them. David knew God would deliver them, and he moved forward with that confidence. If we can understand the power God has given us through His promises, we can be as confident during each battle as David was. David took his war trophy to the king; the trophy was the head of the enemy. This was proof of God's provision.