



What Can David, a Battlefront and Cheese Teach Us?

1 Samuel 17:17-18: (NLT) *¹⁷One day Jesse said to David, Take this basket of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread, and carry them quickly to your brothers. ¹⁸And give these ten cuts of cheese to their captain. See how your brothers are getting along, and bring back a report on how they are doing.*

Special Guest: Matt Kerry



It is not often that those who are young adults rise up to be the heroes of the day. Usually they are in the "figuring life out" stage, but occasionally there comes a young adult who is living far beyond that perplexity. David, who would become known as "a man after God's own heart," was such a young man. This designation would be made apparent when he visited the battlefront to bring food to his brothers and ended up defeating Goliath. Now, the story of his battle with Goliath is well-known, but the events leading up to that battle? Well, they deserve our attention. Focusing on what David already believed and thought - and what he said and did as a result - will reveal

FIVE POINTS TO A STRONGER CHRISTIAN LIFE for us. Why not learn how to be more focused on God's will from *a man after God's own heart*?

(Commentary has been edited for brevity and clarity. Matt's comments are shown in purple.)

We welcome Matt Kerry to Christian Questions.

I am a very happy husband and very happy father to two wonderful daughters. I have a great day job, but my real passion in life is dedicated to the service of the LORD. I am what I would consider to be a truth-seeker. I'm studying the Scriptures as diligently as I can in order to find all the gems that God has hidden for us in the Scriptures. I've been studying for about 25 years. I'm an elder in my local church and speak at various Bible conventions throughout the year. I also prepare different online Bible study videos on a variety of topics.



Let's dive into the backstory of David being prepared to meet Goliath:

1 Samuel 17:17-18: (NLT) *¹⁷One day Jesse (David's father) said to David, Take this basket of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread, and carry them quickly to your brothers. ¹⁸And give these ten cuts of cheese to their captain. See how your brothers are getting along, and bring back a report on how they are doing.*

David goes to work according to his father's request.

No questions or doubts; he delivers the care package:

1 Samuel 17:20,22-23: (NASB) *²⁰So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him....²²Then David left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper, and ran to the battle line and entered in order to greet his brothers. ²³As he was talking with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine from Gath named Goliath, was coming up from the army of the Philistines, and he spoke (the words of his previous challenge) and David heard them.*





Goliath is a big, audacious character who cried out to the Israelites:

1 Samuel 17:8-10: (KJV) ⁸...Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you... ⁹If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail (win) against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. ¹⁰And the Philistine said, I **defy <2778>** the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.

Israel was listening and did not want to go back to slavery like they had been in Egypt. But Goliath tips the scales when he says, *I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.*

Defy: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2778 *charaph*; defame

Goliath was defaming or slandering God Almighty! Goliath was not a little man - he was about 9 feet tall, a giant of giants. He was an imposing figure and repeated his taunting challenge every day for forty days.

David's response is: "We can win this battle; somebody needs to take him down." There is this interaction in verse 26 where David asks, *What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel?*

Saul had given the soldiers a laundry list of rewards for anyone who defeated Goliath. David is asking those around him: "Why don't you go fight him? Why don't you? ...No? Why don't YOU give it a shot?" David's brother chides him and says: "You know, kid, you need to slow down. I know that you just want to see a fight. I know you want to see a battle. Maybe you want to see somebody get seriously injured. Maybe that's fun for you, but this is the real deal." But this is not what David is thinking. David trusts completely in the power of God, so he is asking genuine questions: "Why are none of you taking God up on His promises to deliver us in this battle?" We will discuss these promises shortly.

David has an instinctive response because he is not being understood.

recap
recap

- He sees that the army is confused, scared and unsure of what to do.
- He asks why they are afraid when the promises of God ensure a victory.
- He stirs up a commotion. He repeats his question to multiple people.

1 Samuel 17:26: (NASB) ²⁶Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, *What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?*

David is causing friction at the battlefront.

He does not understand why this is causing friction and upsetting everyone. God had given them these promises, and he fully believed in them. He thought if one of them went up to fight, the Israelite would win. Instead, when they all cower away from the opportunity, David feels compelled to take up the responsibility to say, "I am going to do it!"

THIS BRINGS US TO THE FIRST OF OUR FIVE POINTS TO A STRONGER CHRISTIAN LIFE:

1

Live in the power of God by trusting the previous promises of God.



God did NOT ask David to volunteer.
David KNEW God's promises and believed!

FAITH

In trusting a promise previously given.

What did God tell the Israelites?

QUESTION:

What has God told us?



Leviticus 26:3,6,8:

3 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them...

6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and **none shall make you afraid**...

8 And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an **hundred** of you shall put **ten thousand** to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

It is most impressive here to think of all the stories of the Bible before David's time where God came in and said: "I want you to do this for Me." Then people would do them, and it would work out. This is not one of those times.

KEY TAKEAWAY: God did not ask David to volunteer. He did not give him any forewarning - nothing in writing. David had to lean on experiences he heard about a long time ago. When this opportunity presented itself, he said: "I have faith that this is exactly what God wants me to do."

This is very impressive for one who was essentially still a child or teenager. He had the composure in himself to trust in the previous promises of God.

God's past promises to and protection of Israel were plain:

Leviticus 26:3,6-8: (NASB) ³If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out. ⁶I shall also grant peace in the land, so that you may lie down with no one making you tremble. I shall also eliminate harmful beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land. ⁷But you will chase your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword; ⁸five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword.



Five of you will chase a hundred - can you imagine seeing five people chasing away a hundred? We see evidence of this when Joshua leads the Israelites into Jericho, and the two spies come in the city. Rahab says: "We have heard of your victories," and she named some of the recent victories.

One of the things she mentioned was the parting of the Red Sea. Remember, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years after the parting of the Red Sea. These things happened long before she met the spies. Rahab heard these stories and believed them. She had faith in God, even though she was not a Jew, because she had heard of the victories that God had given the Israelites. What a wonderful promise David was leaning on.



This gives us a strong sense of a young man with great faith and clarity.

Now let's look at ourselves.

What did God tell us and require of us long ago when the gospel message was formed:

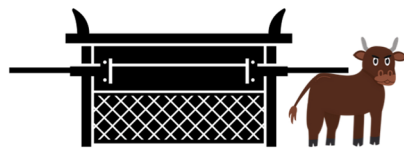
John 15:12: (NASB) *This is my commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.*

Romans 12:1: (NASB) *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*

These are two of my personal favorite scriptures. The *commandment* - not the suggestion - not the request - the *commandment that you love one another*. We have essentially an army of brethren in this day and age, but we fight a different battle. The battle is not a physical one versus a literal human giant. The battle is against the tendencies of our fallen fleshly nature. It starts with *love one another, just as I have loved you*. In Romans 12:1, God is telling us through Paul to lay yourself down - *to present your bodies a living sacrifice*.

- ❖ Live with a subtle courage.
- ❖ Live with a humble boldness.

We can all treat serving God like a hobby. We turn it on or off when it is convenient, or when we have time to think about it. There was a quote in a political cartoon years ago that said:



"The problem with a living sacrifice is that it keeps trying to crawl off the altar."

It is helpful to keep in mind that God has given us His Laws for our happiness and our benefit. When we humble ourselves and do what He wants us to do, we are rewarded in the long run.

The promises we rely on were given long ago, and yet they are as valid today as they were then.

What types of experiences warrant the encouragement of, "Don't worry, I will be with you."

Here are two examples:

Witnessing to the gospel:

2 Timothy 4:2: (NASB) *Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season...*

We know that when we preach the word of God, there is a possibility of some negative reactions. We do not want to provoke or insult others. We want to make sure we do it in the right way, but that does not mean that we do NOT do it. If we see an opportunity to preach the word, we should take it.

We need to act on the opportunity because we have the promises to hold us up.





Living faithfully in an unfaithful world:

Hebrews 10:32-36: (NASB) ³²*But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, ³³partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. ³⁴For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one. ³⁵Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. ³⁶For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.*

It is a pretty far-out concept to think that the “good old days” were when they were being persecuted and had their property taken away. But if we think about it - if we really have faith in God's promises and God tells us these things could happen - we have to remember that we are *storing up for ourselves treasures in heaven*. It is not the treasures of the world in front of us to be desired. What seems to be painful sometimes in the long run will be the most joyous experiences we could have.



Amen to that! We just have to remember this during those hard times.



DAVID DID NOT EVEN REMOTELY GIVE IN TO ANY FEAR OF REPERCUSSION WHILE AT THE BATTLEFRONT. EVEN THOUGH HE STOOD ALONE. HIS FAITH WAS SOUND AND COURAGEOUS. WHY? HE KNEW THE LEGACY OF GOD'S WAYS AND GOD'S PROMISES. LET US DO THE SAME.

LET US TRUST IN GOD FOR HIS TRACK RECORD IS PERFECT! LET US TRUST IN HIS TRUST IN US!

The Bible is a big book and it is FULL of God's plans and purposes coming to fruition. This is a GREAT spiritual confidence builder!

With such a strong history of God's deliverances in place, how do we bring that legacy into our present experiences?

To begin with, we will immediately look at the young man David and his battlefront experience. We have already seen his faithful reliance on what God HAD done for Israel and now we will see him thoroughly depend upon that history of deliverance continuing. As we unfold David's experience, let's put ourselves in his shoes.



What about the cheese?
It is coming up soon.



THIS BRINGS US TO THE SECOND OF OUR FIVE POINTS TO A STRONGER CHRISTIAN LIFE:



2

He knew that it was God that would deliver the victory.

FAITH

1 Samuel 17:35: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

1 Samuel 17:37: David said...The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine...



David knew that God orchestrates victories for His people whenever they are needed.

It is important to note that David had knowledge and awareness of how God won victories for people before David was born. Plus, he had his own personal experiences that we will touch on later as well. David knew God was going to orchestrate the victory against Goliath. He did not rely on his own talents; he knew that God was going to take care of it. That is a powerful piece of faith.

Every time we talk about this description of David, it strikes us that he is just a kid here, and yet he has this degree of faith.

Let's go back to David's experiences.

At the battlefront, King Saul himself sends for David and asks him to repeat what he had said to others:

1 Samuel 17:32-33: (NASB) ³²David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine. ³³Then Saul said to David, You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth.



Check out our CQ Kids videos:
WHO WAS DAVID? PARTS I AND II
christianquestions.com/youtube



We have this dramatic conversation between a shepherd boy - who probably smells like sheep - in front of the king of Israel while the army is arrayed for battle. The boy says, "I'll fight the guy." And King Saul says, "No, you can't." Why would this boy, who was too young to fight, be so willing to battle this unbeaten warrior?

Well, we assume there are a few things going through his head, and one of them is that he had been attacked previously by lions and bears (1 Samuel 17:34-37).

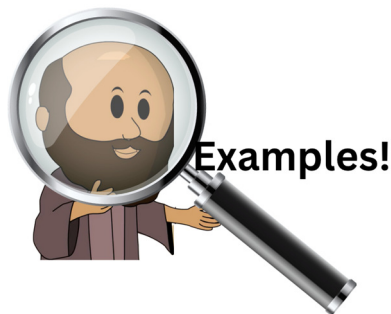







And I do not care how big or strong we think David was, the scripture says he grabbed a lion by the beard and killed it. Think of the biggest, strongest man you know. If he is close enough to a bear to grab him by the hair anywhere, it would take the bear a nanosecond to paralyze the man with his strength.



We are being told there that God orchestrated the victory for David by putting the bear and the lion in a situation where they could not fight back effectively. Something happened with those animals that left them vulnerable so that David could win. We do not know how the LORD orchestrated it. It was not about how strong David was or about how great a fighter he learned to be by taking care of sheep. **THIS WAS ABOUT GOD!** We need to make sure we understand this portion of the lesson, that this is **NOT** about what a great warrior David was; this is about how great a God we have! This is about His power and love for us, and the things He can do. We do not need to be entangled in the details, asking ourselves, "How is God going to do this?" We just need to know He will.

We see this also in our transition to the life of the Apostle Paul. When we talk about learning from experience and why Paul had much confidence, we read:



-  Acts 14 - He was stoned in Lystra.
-  Acts 16 - He was beaten and put in prison.
-  Acts 19 - He was threatened by the mob in Ephesus.
-  Acts 27 - He was shipwrecked.
-  Acts 28 - He was bitten by a viper.

Paul did not have supernatural powers - God was taking care of him. When we have experiences like this and know how God takes care of us, we can have confidence and faith in Him. It motivates us to trust God to take care of us. He will build our confidence.

Paul learned to rely only on God:

2 Corinthians 1:9-10: (NLT) ⁹*In fact, we expected to die. but as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead.* ¹⁰*And He did rescue us from mortal danger, and He will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in Him, and He will continue to rescue us.*

The interesting thing about these texts is Paul is saying, *we expected to die*, but God had other plans. *We stopped relying on ourselves* and on how they thought things were going to go. They put their faith in how God could deliver them for His purposes. Not just because He liked them (or us), but for His purposes. Every deliverance of the Apostle Paul (from Acts, chapters 14 to 28) was so Paul could continue to preach the gospel and build the churches.



That is the key point here.

- ❖ David understood that God would deliver the next victory.
- ❖ The Apostle Paul understood that God would deliver the next victory.
- ❖ We, therefore, need to understand that God will deliver the next victory.



DAVID KNEW THAT GOD HAS NOT ONLY BEEN THE GOD OF DELIVERANCE IN THE PAST. BUT HE IS ALSO THE GOD OF PRESENT DELIVERANCE FOR HIS PEOPLE. SOMETIMES WE LOOK AT BIBLICAL HISTORY AND THINK HOW DIFFERENT GOD'S ROLE WAS BACK THEN.

LET US INSTEAD REALIZE THAT WE ARE LIVING BIBLICAL HISTORY HERE AND NOW IN THESE PROPHESED END TIMES! GOD STILL DELIVERS!

The idea that we are living in biblical times because biblical prophecy is being unfolded in front of our eyes should be inspirational. Therefore, God's presence is with His people just like it was way back then. It is an amazing piece of God's plan.

Keep in mind, God did not tell these folks, "This story is going to be written about you, so make sure you do it well." None of that happened. There is a moment they made a decision, and then we have been talking about it for thousands of years. Be prepared and be motivated to live by faith, and to do the hard thing if it is necessary.

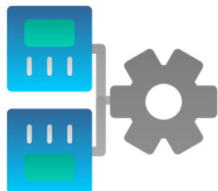
David knew God would deliver the next victory. The Apostle Paul told us that God's deliverance was waiting for him to seize the opportunities in front of him - *We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us.* That was about Paul, and we were talking about David, but what about us?

THIS BRINGS US TO THE THIRD OF OUR FIVE POINTS TO A STRONGER CHRISTIAN LIFE:

3

David risked his life and delayed his worldly duties to do God's will. He immediately **changed his priorities.**

How can we relate?



Are we ever too involved in our worldly responsibilities that we might miss an opportunity from God?



David was continuously alert to God's opportunities in his daily life.

Are we ever afraid of how our actions or opinions toward our faith might affect our relationships with our coworkers?



Let's talk a little bit about how this whole subject came about.

Do we get up and go to work and think...?
Somewhere along the way today, I am hopefully going to serve God.

OR do we think...?
Today I am going to serve God, and along the way fulfill all my other responsibilities.

What is our frame of mind? Which is our highest priority?



I was in Denver, Colorado, over the summer. I remember I was with my two coworkers. We went to lunch and had plenty of time. After lunch, we were walking back to our hotel and there was a man there on the street, and he had a sign that he was holding. There was an odd question on the sign. It said something about, "What is this all for?" This bell went off into my mind and said, I need to stop and talk to this person. I need to find out why he is holding this sign, and if he is genuinely wondering what is this all for, then what a great opportunity to preach the gospel of the kingdom, right? But I did not do it. I did not do it because my coworkers were with me. I started to think, what are they going to think? Is it going to be awkward for them? Are they going to go back to the hotel without me? Am I going to make them feel uncomfortable? I have been regretting that decision ever since. So, when I saw this story coming up - again, we will talk about the cheese later - when this story came up, I just thought, I did not do what David did.



We must keep in mind that yes, David was a young man, but David had something that was very special. David was anointed, so he knew he was going to be used in God's service. That gave him great confidence. Some Christians may not realize this, but the promise to those who serve Jesus is that they are anointed. This is what the New Testament says (2 Corinthians 1:21 and Hebrews 1:9). Therefore, we are authorized to live with that same confidence David had.

Sometimes we miss the opportunity when somebody puts a sign up that says, "Please tell me." This great experience motivated Matt to do something different. He now knows to be more aware of these things. How do we make use of such opportunities? Let's return to David to examine this.

When speaking to King Saul, David made very plain statements about what the priorities were with this particular military problem:

1 Samuel 17:36: (NASB) *Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God.*



David the shepherd boy is saying: “I have a solution for your military problem, Sir, Mighty King. I can kill Goliath; I can take him out because he is taunting the armies of the living God. It is not that he is insulting me; he is taunting the armies of God Almighty!” David’s statement was built upon Goliath’s challenge - a fight to the death. His conclusion was that the people of the living God would unequivocally prevail. We talked about how David understood history. He also saw God’s hand in his own life and was ready to act.

David had four basic priorities as he moved forward in life. How might this compare to us?

<u>David’s Daily Priorities</u>	<u>Our Daily Priorities</u>
<p>David tended sheep for his father.</p>  <p>He played the harp for Saul. (He switched between these two responsibilities).</p> <p>in between these, he came across Goliath defying God.</p> <p>After this, he ceased to be a shepherd or a musician and became the warrior that God required.</p>	<p>We are at work.</p>  <p>We are engaged in our work.</p> <p>While working, someone says, “You would have to be a fool to believe in God.”</p> <p>What do we do? Do we become the witness that God requires?</p>



TIME TO GET PRACTICAL

Hopefully we do become the witness God requires. Since I had that experience on the street, there have been a few more that have popped up where if I see an opportunity where I can please God, everything else can wait just a minute. I am going to take that opportunity.

Maybe I hear a coworker say something slanting. Again, it is not our job to stand up at a table and point a finger and make a big deal about it. Maybe if we just pull that individual aside and say, “Hey, if you don’t believe in God, look, I understand - a lot of people don’t. But if you are ever curious as to why I do, I would love to talk to you about it. I just want to put that out there.”

Another approach, “Hey, at least do me a favor. I do believe in God. In fact, I have devoted my life to Him. If you see me around, I would really appreciate it if you did not say that.” Now you are putting them in a spot where they have to recognize how strong your faith is to you, as opposed to them feeling totally free to tell you that they don’t have any faith, and that you might be silly for having faith. That also is putting yourself in a spot where they might think a little bit less of you. And you know what? That is perfectly fine.



Matt is showing us in a practical way how to reorganize our priorities exactly the way David did. David was going about his daily business. Something came along, and he completely changed because God's purpose was calling.



DAVID WAS NOT LOOKING FOR TROUBLE, BUT HE WAS THOROUGHLY TUNED IN TO GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PROTECTION. THE KEY HERE IS THAT WHEN HE SAW GOLIATH, HE DIDN'T SEE A GIANT, FEARLESS AND BLOOD THIRSTY WARRIOR. INSTEAD, HE SAW AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GOD TO BE GLORIFIED AND IMMEDIATELY ENGAGED AND RESPONDED WITH HIS "GOD-FIRST" PRIORITIES.

WHAT WILL WE ENGAGE, AND HOW WILL WE RESPOND TO THE PERCEIVED GIANTS IN OUR LIVES?

There are a few ways to think about this. We are going to have some external giants and will have to break down some internal strongholds. As we are going throughout our day and lives, whether it is an external force or an internal force that we are struggling with, we already have the victory if we lean on God.

If we remain in that connected state of peace, that *instant in prayer*, that constant mindfulness that God is with us, we can trust that He can deliver us in His own way from anything. Our job is just to have confidence in Him. We cannot worry about our own ability to overcome it. If we are struggling with something internally and have faith, God has told us He is going to help us overcome that. We must do our best to hang in there, stay close to Him, and everything is going to turn out just fine.

To observe and follow David, such a spiritually-mature young man in such a dramatic experience, is truly inspirational.

**It is one thing to put our priorities in place.
It is another to actually act on them! How do we do that?**

The answers here might be a little more subtle than our previous answers. We need to relook at a few aspects of how David responded to his circumstances with the specific "how to" question of action in mind.



A God-honoring approach lifts us out of fear and into accomplishment.

What we will find is a focused and God-honoring approach that lifts us out of fear and into accomplishment. This is where David lived.

THIS BRINGS US TO THE FOURTH OF OUR
FIVE POINTS TO A STRONGER CHRISTIAN LIFE:

4

He overcame any fear or discouragement and disregarded the *nay-sayers*.
Wisdom and Courage: is it good or bad to speak up?

When should you speak or act?
When you know you should

What is a bad reason not to speak or act?
Because you are scared.



To be unparalyzed by fear or discouragement, David applied both wisdom and courage.

David did overcome the nay-sayers. Think about it - you are the young guy. You are coming up to this battlefield. There is a bunch of people there who are experienced fighters. You are not. They have been chosen and selected to fight this battle against the enemy. You have not. And how does David handle it? He does not skip a beat. He walks right in there and says, "I know the right thing to do, and so I am going to do it."



When we talk about fear, there are two ways to cure fear that I am familiar with. 1 John 4:18 tells us that *love cures fear*. In this case, it was David's love for God. That was in the primary spot of his mind - nothing else was a close second.

The second thing that cures fear is action. Sometimes we worry about doing something instead of actually doing it. Sitting around worrying about it is worse than when we take action and do it. So, live in the promises of God, take action, take a chance. God cannot do any work if we are not willing to trust him and give it a shot.

Often it takes more energy to worry about it than it does to actually do it.

David overcame any fear or discouragement, disregarded the naysayers and moved forward. We need to apply that to ourselves.

It is hard to say just how pronounced the negative reactions were to the young man David. After all, he described Goliath not as a giant, fearsome warrior, but as a giant detractor of God's glory.

David did not describe somebody to be afraid of; he described somebody who was irreverent toward God Almighty:

1 Samuel 17:26: (NASB) *Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?*



We read this verse before, and we read it again to remind us of David's attitude and action. He stood and called out the darkness. He said: "We cannot stand here. Who is this individual who taunts the armies of God Himself?" David is standing firm before he acts, looking for one of the warriors to stand up and fight Goliath. As we have already seen, he was discouraged by the soldiers and his brother.



As we have already seen, King Saul also discouraged him:

1 Samuel 17:33: (NASB) *Then Saul said to David, You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth.*

King Saul is basically saying: "You cannot do this. Son, I appreciate your enthusiasm; you are a good boy. But no, this is a giant who is out there who can step on you. You cannot do this."

From the outside in, what did David have going for him? He had the wisdom that comes from believing in God's power and God Himself. He had the courage that comes from believing that God's power applied to him.

With this wisdom and this courage, we ask two important questions:



When should we speak or act?



When we know we should.



What is a bad reason not to speak or act?



Because we are scared.

Let's see why those short answers are profound by looking at examples of those who spoke and acted and see what they had in common.

How were both WISDOM and COURAGE present in their actions and words?

Examples of those who spoke and acted:



**What did they have in common?
How were both wisdom and courage present in their actions and words?**

We will discuss four good examples:
Jeremiah, Moses, John the Baptist and Elijah.

Before we get into details of the individuals, all four of them took an action or said words that were not convenient for them personally. If these gentlemen were looking to get ahead in life, this was not the way to do it.

JEREMIAH: Jeremiah spoke and was threatened with death. Jeremiah ended up in a public cage for people to stare at him. He was abused physically for standing up and speaking God's prophecy of doom.

MOSES: If you are looking to get ahead, Moses was on the fast track. He had been put into a river, raised by the Egyptians and he had a good life. But once he found out that he was really a Hebrew and this was not where he belonged, he left. He left being a prince of Egypt to wander the wilderness and then go rescue his people.



JOHN THE BAPTIST: John was criticizing Herod, the ruler over the whole land, and generally that is not a wise ladder-climbing decision! He ended up being beheaded for it.

ELIJAH: For years, Elijah was running for his life from Ahab and Jezebel. He had no home, lived in the wilderness and was fed by ravens for a while.

These men did not have great lives, and yet they were all great men of God. What separated them from others is they had this passion for serving God. In their gut, in their core, they knew what God wanted them to do, and they could not shy away from it.

Jeremiah 20:9 (KJV) *...His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.*

He could not NOT say it, even though he was bringing news the people did not want to hear and they would hate him for it. But that is just how it would have to be, because this was something God wanted him to do, and he loved God. "If He gives me something to do, I am going to do it to the best of my ability."

All four of these men did what they thought God wanted them to do. In a worldly sense, it did not work out for them. This is Christian living - doing the right thing without worrying about the consequences because we know God has something better stored up for us.

Those are great examples of those who stood up at their own expense because that priority was in place in their hearts and fear and discouragement just were not going to take over.

What about us? How do we apply spiritual wisdom and courage to overcome fear and discouragement in our lives?



First, realize that God in His wisdom has set us up to do just that:

2 Timothy 1:7: (NASB) *For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and (self) discipline.*

I will add to that, I cannot tell you that you will never be afraid. That is not the point. The point is that when you are afraid, keep in mind two things:

(1) The spirit of fear is not coming from God. When it says, *God has not given us a spirit of timidity*, it is not saying you are never going to be afraid if you follow God. It is just saying to keep in mind that the spirit of fear comes from Satan. It does not come from God because through trust in God, and trust in His *power and love*, is confidence.

(2) You will learn that confidence in Him the more you allow Him to essentially work a miracle in you.



Second, realize that we fight spiritual battles in a physical world and such a fight requires clear priorities:

2 Corinthians 10:3-5: (KJV) ³*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: ⁴(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)* ⁵*Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*



There is a lot that we must fight against that is bigger than we are. It requires us *bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ* - relying on God when we have that earthly, worldly, human fear.

True courage is not blind; it sees what is going on. True wisdom is not deaf; it hears and understands. Draw those things from God and we can become overcomers of fear and discouragement.



What about the cheese?
It is coming up soon.

We are looking at the practicality of overcoming fear and discouragement. The flow of life happens. We want to learn to *manage* that flow instead of *following* the flow. How do we do that?



TIME TO GET PRACTICAL

Everyone has different gifts and talents. Everyone has things that God wants them to do. Use your talent to the best of your ability in the way that God wants you to use it. For me, this message is not, hey, just go around preaching everywhere to everyone. If we preach the word of God and those hearing do not like what we are saying, and we think, *that's their problem* - that is not what we are being asked to do.

We are asked to be gentle, loving and humble. In that process, if we are required to speak the word of God, if we are required to say something in God's name, we should not be afraid to do it, but we must make sure to do it in the right way. There are people out there that do preach loudly, and quite frankly, it may be obnoxious and rude. That is not the spirit of Christ. The spirit of Christ is gentle, loving and humble. So, live in that power. That is my best advice.

That is very good advice. The spirit of Christ gets it done. Jesus, in that gentle, humble, loving, caring and wise way, communicated better than anyone had ever done on the face of the earth.



LIVING A STRONG AND SOUND CHRISTIAN LIFE:

DAVID SAW FEAR AND DISCOURAGEMENT AS UNREASONABLE RESPONSES TO A SERIOUS PROBLEM. ALL HE SAW WAS GOD'S GLORY BEING Demeaned AND ALL HE COULD THINK TO DO WAS TO STAND UP AND DESTROY THOSE IRREVERENT ACTIONS. WHILE OUR CHALLENGES ARE FAR MORE SUBTLE, THEY STILL REQUIRE THE SPIRITUAL WISDOM AND COURAGE THAT DAVID DISPLAYED.

LET US STAND IN THE FACE OF FEAR AND DISCOURAGEMENT, FOCUSED ON FULFILLING OUR GODLY PRIORITIES.

Priorities and managing and overcoming fear and discouragement are absolutely tied together. We cannot separate them.



It is very inspiring to look at how this young man, David, is teaching us so much. What a high and lofty example he has set! Wisdom and courage will defeat fear and discouragement if we let them.

**In what seems like a very short time, David proved himself ready.
What can we learn from his amazing example?**

David saw God's faithfulness in the past and the present. He prioritized God's will first and overcame the serious obstacles of fear and discouragement. We can now see how he was in a clear state of readiness to actually go out and do something that all of the mighty and seasoned warriors around him saw as an unconquerable task.

David's life, belief system, focus and priorities were all in play before he got there. They were working together before he even knew Goliath existed.

**THIS BRINGS US TO THE LAST OF OUR
FIVE POINTS TO A STRONGER CHRISTIAN LIFE:**



5

David was ready. He lived in the power of God.

BE READY

Was David's instinct to immediately switch gears and be involved?

OR

Was David already in that "gear" to begin with?



David's intentional approach to serving God delivered God's people from evil!

The example here is to be intentional, purposeful and ready. When David saw this happen, there was no adjustment period he needed to go through. He did not have to really "change gears," so to speak. He was already in the "right gear." His instinct was immediately to be involved in the problem that was going on. That is so impressive for anybody, let alone a teenager going up against a nine-and-a-half-foot tall guy who probably weighed four or five hundred pounds - all muscle. He sees the scenario, he is already in gear and he has God already in his mind. He is in the presence of God and is ready to be a part of the solution.

That readiness did not happen in a moment. It happened over a lifetime. It happened intentionally by focusing on what was most important - and loving what was most important - so that he could do what was most important.

Here is what spiritually-sound and intentional readiness looks like - David is face-to-kneecap with Goliath:

1 Samuel 17:45-47: (NASB) ⁴⁵Then David said to the Philistine, You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. ⁴⁶This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, ⁴⁷and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands.

This is why David is chosen. Again, we cannot make this point enough: David did not win because of his own strength. He did not have confidence in his own strength. In fact, of all these people here, he is the least likely to win, except maybe one of the sheep. This brings glory to God! It is as if God said, "You bring your best guy, and I will bring you My seemingly most irrelevant guy, and you won't stand a chance." David brings glory to God by offering himself - potentially to death - so that God can work a miracle and everybody can watch it.



We cannot make the drama big enough! The army is on the two hills on either side, and this little guy and this big monster of a guy are standing face-to-face in the valley. David was going to bring him down in the name of God for mocking God Almighty!

His readiness was clear. What about us?

Our readiness must be intentional. This intentionality begins with prayer:

Ephesians 6:18: (NASB) *With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.*

This is a great way to start talking about the armor of God. Prayer is our connection with God. We need to start and end every day feeling connected to God. When we feel His presence, we are reminded of the fact that He is with us. This gives us strength.

It is interesting the way this verse reads about prayer. *Be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints* - it is not just, "Dear LORD, help me now because I have a big problem. Amen." That is not what this kind of prayer is.

This is intentional prayer. "Heavenly Father, I do not know what to do. This is bigger than me. I am afraid and need Your help. I need Your guidance. I need Your spirit." It is laying it all out before the LORD, not just quickly saying, "But I prayed before." No, this is reverently asking our heavenly Father through Jesus to help.



This is the last scripture in the description of the armor of God. Let's circle back to the beginning of the description of the armor because our readiness continues with putting on spiritual armor - just as David had done.



Think about this: David had refused the physical armor of Saul. Saul gave him the best armor that Israel had - his own. David said, "Nope, have not tested it; it does not fit me. I am going in there without it." To all the soldiers, he looked like he was going in completely unarmed. But he was armed...with God's providence, God's care, God's will and God's strength. That is what he needed to defeat the giant.

David was not unarmed. What about us?

Ephesians 6:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.



Verse 14 - Be led by the truth.

Verse 14 - Be righteous in every situation.

Verse 15 - Be peaceful, and spread peace to others.

Verse 16 - Trust in God in all scenarios.

Verse 17 - Be ready to speak the truth.

Based on this lesson, being ready, willing and able takes hard work and consistency. Consider these points:

- Praying is the manifestation of a personal relationship with God.
- We should have a desire to always do God's will despite any inconvenience to us.
- Studying God's word helps us to emulate and understand His love and standard with us, so we can serve and help the brotherhood.
- If we focus on the fruit of the spirit - we see how to obtain Christlikeness.
- By taking care of our bodies spiritually, mentally and physically, we are able to serve God to the best of our ability.



- While wearing the armor of God, we can conquer our “Goliaths.”

The young boy, David, is teaching it all to us by his instinctive readiness to jump at the opportunity of whatever task God put before him. David fought a giant warrior, and in so doing taught us how to fight a giant warrior - our adversary.

Satan is a giant compared to us. He can crush us at any moment if we let ourselves be vulnerable:

1 Peter 5:8: (NASB) *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

The fifth point in our **FIVE POINTS TO A STRONGER CHRISTIAN LIFE** list is to be ready. We need to put our lives in a position of absolute readiness.

Here are three basic points on how to be ready:



1. Be ready to change course NOW!
2. Be ready to give up worldly ways of thinking, acting, feeling and speaking NOW!
3. Be ready to bring the truth of the gospel to anyone in any way that is appropriate NOW!

If we could sum it up with one take away, it is this: **DELIVER THE CHEESE!**

Are we ready to hear about the cheese?



This is the big moment - why are we talking about cheese? Well, I will tell you what really stood out to me about this story. Sometimes we run across these small details and wonder, why is that detail in there? In this story, why doesn't it just start with David walking out on the battlefield? We are told David happened to go there to deliver the bread and cheese from his father to his brothers and their commander.

That is the way God is telling us that this was not planned, that the whole incident came upon David quickly, and that is the example that we want to follow. And so, for the last 3,000 years, we have been talking about the result, but I had never really focused on the lead-up. That is what we are talking about!

This whole discussion is about being ready, being connected to God, understanding our place in serving Him, and what it feels and looks like to see how somebody acts when they are living in the power of God!

Tomorrow when we wake up and prepare for the day, what is going to be in the front of our mind? How are we going to start? What will be our first thought? What will be our motivation? We are all going to go into some habitual process that we do every single morning.





What I am trying to do in my life, what I have taken from this story is that today might be a day when God requires something of me. God has given me so many blessings, and I need to be ready to lay down my life in any way that He sees fit for me to do, so that I can bring glory to His name and can help in whatever little way to bring fulfillment to His plan.

Tomorrow when I wake up, I am going to pray. I am going to ask for His strength. I am going to have faith throughout the day, and I am going to keep my eyes wide open for anything that comes across my way that I think might be God winking at me to say, "Hey, I would like you to do this for Me."

God speaks through His word and through His people. Be close enough to hear what He is saying! This means we must be in a place to realize the past promises of God and the present victories, to put priorities in place, to not worry about fear and discouragement and to stand ready.



DAVID'S EXAMPLE OF UNWAVERING DEDICATION TO THE ONE AND ONLY GOD PROVOKED HIM TO INTENTIONAL AND BOLD ACTION WHEN ALL OTHERS COWERED IN FEAR. THIS ACTION WAS BORN OUT OF AN INGRAINED LOYALTY TO A GOD OF PROMISE AND DELIVERANCE. THIS BIAS TOWARDS GODLY ACTION WAS AN ALREADY PRIORITIZED FOCUS THAT DISREGARDED FEAR AND DISCOURAGEMENT. THIS ACTION CAME FROM GODLY READINESS.

LET US ALSO STAND READY AND FIGHT THE BATTLES THAT GOD WOULD HAVE US TO FIGHT!

We have an amazing biblical account to learn from, enabling us to stand more instinctually ready to serve our heavenly Father the way the shepherd boy David did, who slew a giant in the process to save a nation.

*So, what can David, a battlefront and cheese teach us?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

All quoted scriptures are from the 1995 version of NASB unless otherwise indicated.



Join us next week for our podcast on March 27, 2023
Ep. 1274: If I Have God's Peace, Why Am I So Stressed?

Study Questions follow

Study QUESTIONS

Ep. 1273: What Can David, a Battlefield, and Cheese Teach Us?

<https://christianquestions.com/character/1273-david-battlefront-cheese/>

See:  **CQ Rewind**
SHOW NOTES

First point: Faith is trusting in a previous promise of God.

1. Who is David? What was his occupation? What did his father send him to do? What did he observe when he came to the battlefield? Why was David so incensed that no one would take up Goliath's challenge? Why do David's actions stir up friction, and why does this puzzle him? (See 1 Samuel 17)
2. Did God ask David to fight Goliath for Him? Why did David have the faith to step out and volunteer to do this? What does God command of us? Against which "giants" do we battle? What are two types of experiences in which we might need God's "Do not worry; I will be with you" promise? (See Leviticus 26:3,6,8, John 15:12, Romans 12:1, 2 Timothy 4:2, Hebrews 10:32-36)

Living a strong Christian life: Why do you trust in God? Do you trust in His trust in you? Are you living with "subtle courage and humble boldness"?

Second point: God orchestrates victories for His people whenever they are needed.

3. Did David trust in his own abilities and his own triumphs over adversity? How did the Apostle Paul develop his confidence? How did Paul look at his life-threatening experiences? What did both David and Paul believe? (See 1 Samuel 17:35,37, Acts chapters 14-28, 2 Corinthians 1:9-10)

Living a strong Christian life: Do you realize that you are living in biblical history right now and that God still delivers in your life? Where have you seen this in your life?

Third point: David was intentionally alert to God's opportunities in his daily life.

4. What should our frame of mind be as we go through our daily duties? What is our *highest* priority? What did David see when he looked at that giant, fearless and bloodthirsty warrior in front of him? How did David's being anointed at a young age focus his life? How should our anointing as Christians focus ours? How might we respond to criticisms of our Christian walk from others?

Living a strong Christian life: How do you respond to the "giants" in your life? Do you reach for God's hand in your life's experiences? Are you living *intentionally* alert to God's opportunities? What helps with this?

Fourth point: David applied wisdom and courage to overcome criticism, sarcasm and belittlement.

5. What are two things that "cure" fear? How did David describe Goliath? What did David have going for him due to his perception of Goliath? When should we speak or act? (See 1 John 4:18, 1 Samuel 17:26)
6. Describe the four examples of wisdom and courage given: Jeremiah, Moses, John the Baptist and Elijah. What are two essential points to remember in our fight against spiritual battles and against our own fear and discouragement? (See 2 Timothy 1:7, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

Living a strong Christian life: Are you able to stand in the face of fear and discouragement? Are you focused on fulfilling your godly priorities? In what specific struggles will you ask for God's help?

Fifth point: David LIVED in the power of God, intentionally seeking to serve God through his daily life.

7. How do we prepare ourselves to be "intentional"? Was David really unarmed? Are we? Who is our biggest "Goliath"? How do we hear what God speaks to us? (See 1 Samuel 17:45-47, Ephesians 6:14-18, 1 Peter 5:8)

Living a strong Christian life: Are you *standing ready* to fight the battles that God will have you fight?