

Champions Arise

by Lewis Gregory

The sermon challenges believers to recognize their identity as champions in Christ and to rise up against the giants in their lives with faith and courage.

Duration: 48:53

Scripture: Psalm 94:16, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the story of David and Goliath from the Bible. He emphasizes that despite facing giants in our lives, we must see the truth and know it as it is. David's three older brothers were assigned to fight in the battle against Goliath, but they were terrified and turned away. However, David, though not looking, feeling, or acting like a champion, knew he had a commission from God and stepped up to the challenge. The speaker also mentions the importance of having a higher purpose and determination, as seen in the story of Eric Little.

Transcript

This morning, I want us to turn our attention to a passage of Scripture that's quite well known and often relegated to children, but before we get there, we're going to do it by way of a lead-in, and in Psalm chapter 94, verse 16. The psalmist is voicing a request, expressing a concern and asking a question on behalf of the Lord. Psalm 94, verse 16.

He says there, Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? Or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? Let me lead us in prayer. Now Lord, these are challenging questions, and they warrant an answer. And Lord, this day as we've sung about you, we're here gathered in your name, and for the sole purpose of acknowledging you, worshiping you, and learning of you.

And so Lord, we wait expectantly now upon you. We know you have something in store for us. As we've come together in your name, you're in our midst, so we know you're here on our behalf to do something to make a difference in our lives.

Lord God, may you be more than just a silent observer. May you be the active, dynamic force of total transformation in our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

On Friday, I walked the corridors of the VA hospital in Decatur. There's at least one I know that has been around that place. You've been there, right? Joseph? Others? Well, I'll tell you, I think really all of us should go there.

I'm a Vietnam veteran, and I've discovered that I have experienced some injuries that I did not realize during my wartime in Vietnam. But nonetheless, as I was there and looking at these various men, these are our wounded warriors. The wounds may have healed externally, but you can see on their faces, they're deep, entrenched, embedded, and severe.

These are the men and women who have risked their lives and lived to tell about it, although maybe with parts and pieces missing. Some were in wheelchairs. Others had a limb amputated.

Some had artificial limbs. These are our warriors, our heroes. We don't see them.

We hear about them, perhaps from a distance. Maybe some of you have family or friends or relatives that have been there. I personally have some that have died there on the battlefields.

And while we recognize them from a distance for who they are, today I want us to look and recognize the champions among us and what it means to be a champion. And I would further say it's time for the champions to arise. You see, God is looking for champions.

I mean, it's a time in our world where we need champions. Yes, of course, there are still men and women fighting on foreign fields, but there's a battle raging so intense and so severe that it rests right here in our own lives, in our own midst. Not just the battle for the freedom of our country, but the onslaught against the name of our Lord and his kingdom.

And so he's asking here a very pointed question. Who will rise up for me, God says, for me? Does anybody care about me? You're always wanting to know who cares about you. You're always wanting to know what's in it for you.

But he says, what about me? What about me? How do you think I feel? What do you think is on my mind? And he says, who will rise up for me against the evildoers, those that would degrade and defame and pervert and corrupt my holy name? Who will take that kind of a stand for me against the workers of iniquity? Well, he's not talking just about someone who would take a sign and march against abortion, against alcohol, against whatever it might be that you perceive that God might be against. He's talking about something far greater than that, something much more significant than that, and I believe most vividly illustrated in 1 Samuel chapter 17. And we'll begin at the beginning of this chapter and kind of work our way through it.

I'll hit the high points for you. Some of this story is quite well known to you. It's the story we commonly hear of as the story of David and Goliath.

We quickly relegate that to a children's story and dismiss it. Even now the temptation might be to be thinking to yourself, well, I already know about that, and just sort of zone out or daydream or whatever. No, do not.

This is for you. 1 Samuel 17 and verse 1. Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle. You see, there are enemies raging, and they're always there to oppose us.

But as it goes on to say, Saul and the men of Israel, verse 2, were gathered together, and they pitched their tents in the valley of Elah, and they set their battle in array against the Philistines. The Philistines came against God's people, and Saul the king gathered his army in opposition to them. They took their stands on opposite mountains.

There was a valley in between. It's, I suspect, not nearly like the mountains far away that we see in the distance if we look across here in these beautiful scenery around us. But there were two high places, and there was a valley in between.

Now the troops were on either side on these high places, and down in the valley came a champion, verse 4. And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines named Goliath of Gath, whose height was about ten feet tall. That's huge. That's huge.

This guy was a big, big man, rightfully called a giant, because he was a giant. And although his size was quite imposing and intimidating, his voice was also rather earth-shaking. And so here's this giant, which they describe as a champion.

A champion because he was their warrior, and as a champion, it implies he was their winner. In the story Chariots of Fire, one of the runners named Abraham was asked, Well, how do you feel when you lose? He said, I don't know. I've never lost.

So he was a champion. Champions don't lose. Of course, later in the story, he finds that there's someone with much more zeal, with a deeper drive and determination than he himself had.

And when he saw that one run, Eric Little, he said, It terrifies me. Because he saw in that man a drive and determination, a higher purpose, goal, and objective than he himself had. And suddenly he knew he had made his match, and then some.

Because you see, Eric Little said, I run because I sense his pleasure. He was running for another cause, for a greater cause. But we have Goliath standing here, this imposing force.

And it begins to describe all of his armor, and he's got massive armor, and he would be like the army tank of his day, a human tank, just enshrouded in this armor, an invisible force, as it were. And so he comes forth into the valley, and he begins to boast and brag of his greatness, and what he's going to do to God's people. Now, we see that in verse 8, And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are you come out to set your battle in a ray? Why waste your time lining up your troops? He said, I've got a simple solution for you.

He said, I am a Philistine. Now, he says, your servants to Saul. So he says, look, let's make this very easy.

He says, choose your man for you, and let him come down to me. Now, the first thing we observe here is how Satan's strategy is. And while I won't delve into this from the standpoint that our real enemy is that old serpent, the devil, I do want you to see an underlying theme in this study.

And the thing I think you need to be aware of here is how Satan is so quick to set the stage. And if we're not careful, we will let him define the terms of engagement. And the moment we do that, we stoop to his level.

And once you've stooped to his level and try to fight a battle on his plane, you're guaranteed to lose. In fact, you've lost already. You've lost already.

Nonetheless, that's exactly what he does. He comes to God's people, and he tells them, this is how it's going to be. And this is how you're going down.

He sets the stage. He calls the shots. After all, he is the champion.

Now, this is totally foreign to the way God had taught his people to function. And how were they to function? Quite simply, you call upon the name of the Lord. You seek the Lord.

You get guidance from the Lord. You go according to his direction and instruction. But now, we have the enemy staring them down, blasting them with his loud and boisterous voice, and suddenly, all thought of God has vanished.

And all they can see is this huge giant with this big mouth. And it put the fear in them. They were terrified.

Verse 10, the Philistine, that's what they call Goliath, the Philistine. And verse 10, Goliath said, I defy the armies of Israel this day. Give me a man.

Give me a man that we might fight together. He's saying, look, I'm calling for you to bring me a champion. I'm the champion, but if you've got anybody that you think could possibly stand up to me, bring it on.

He says, send him out. Let him come forth. He's challenged them.

He says, we can solve this very easily, just the two of us. One to one, man on man. Let's just get it over with right now, right here.

In verse 11, let's see what happens. Now, we have this huge giant, this enormous problem. Let's put it in the context of your life.

Your huge problems, and although they may seem small to us that observe, for you, they are huge. They are massive. They're overwhelming.

We may call it the straw that broke the camel's back. It doesn't matter. If it broke its back, no matter how small the straw is, it did the deed of destruction on the camel.

And so it will in your life. There finally gets to be a point where something, maybe seemingly insignificant to others, overwhelms you to the point where you crack, snap, collapse. But we have before us a giant.

You have your own giants, your own forms of opposition, your own difficulties in life, your own hurdles, your own challenges. So you've got this giant before you, and all you can do is keep dwelling on how big it is, how bad it is, how terrifying it is to you, how fearful and anxious you are in light of it, how absolutely overwhelmed at times you become because of it. But it's your giant, and you have to face it.

It's nobody else. It's there you are, and it's right there staring you in the face. You wake up in the morning, and bam, first thing in your mind, the giant.

This huge and horrific problem right there glaring you in the face. And the thoughts begin to come, one after the other. What am I going to do? What am I going to do? How can I possibly? I don't see how I can go on.

I don't see how I can handle it. One day, one moment, I can't deal with this anymore. These are the things that come when the giant screams loud in your ear.

And when Saul and all Israel heard, verse 11, when Saul and all Israel, all Israel that is the soldiers present, the Israelite army, all those that were there on the battlefield, when they heard those words of the Philistine, the giant Goliath, what was their response? It says they were dismayed, dismayed, dismayed, and greatly afraid. Not just a little bit afraid. Not just a little bit frightened.

Greatly afraid. They were dismayed. That is, all hope is gone.

Overwhelmed. Overwhelmed. Devastated.

And greatly afraid. You see, as humans, we have a built-in sense of insecurity. Whether we want to admit it or not, it's always there, because flawed, failing humanity, well, it's already proven that it can't always look out for us, take care of us, and be for us what we know we need in the moment.

So we've gone far enough down the path of life to know that our own humanity has its limits and its weaknesses and its flaws and failures and faults. And so, at times, we realize we're done for. There's no hope.

You know, champions are all around us, and they come in various sizes and forms. I'm reminded of a time in the Philippines. We were on a remote island.

It was called the island of Negros Occidental. And on that island, there was a man that showed up and began to sit in on our teachings. Come to find out, he said that God had called him to be an evangelist, and he had been out in the bush, and he had been working with some of the people out in the villages, but he had primarily said he had been called to work with the communist rebels, to go into them, to reach them, to evangelize them for the Lord.

Except he had a problem. He was terrified of them. You see, they were brutal.

They were cruel. They were vicious. This was back in the 80s.

Communism was flourishing. They were well-funded, and they were on a rampage to take over the Philippines. And so they, of course, were on a reign of terror.

And fear and intimidation are good tools and great weapons. And so if you can terrorize the villagers by doing various things, well, you can put the fear in them. And this man said, You know, I grew up with a lot of these guys that are out there that are part of the communist Red Guard.

And he said, They were my friends growing up, and I can't stand the thought that they have given their lives over to such a horrible philosophy. When he says, I know the Lord, but yet I also know how cruel and vicious these men have become. And so he says, Well, on the one hand, I believe God wants me to go in and face them and talk to them.

I've tried it, and every time I get closer, I just turn tail and run. Well, that's kind of the way the soldiers were here. I mean, they're terrified of this giant.

Now, my friend is facing a giant, and yet he knows he has a commission from God. He's being called to stand up, to step up to the plate, and to take the challenge. But he doesn't look like, feel like, or even act

like a champion.

In fact, all he knows is his human limitations, and his own personal weaknesses. He's tried to muster up the courage, and he's tried to go forward, but every time he has failed, and he's fallen, he's pulled back. And so now here he is, and he's at this meeting with us, and he says, And furthermore, he said, I injured myself at one time, and I've got, my back has been broken, and I've got all this pain, and I'm suffering, and he said, Between my human physical pain, and the sheer terror of the thought of going back to those villages, he said, I don't think I can go on.

I can't do it. And so I said, Well, let's pray for you, that God will in some way show you who he is, and what he can do. And so during the time of the conference, as we were praying, and God was speaking to him, and he was definitely getting encouraged by the teachings, but still, he had that undercurrent of fear that kept pulling him down, pulling him down, pulling him down.

And so the last day after the sessions were over, he was actually sitting on the back of a truck. He was about to head out on the back of a pickup truck. He was sitting there, and we came over to him, and began to ask him some questions.

How are you doing, and what are your thoughts? And he said, Well, I know God wants me to go. He said, I don't see how it's going to make any difference, because I've tried this before. And I said, And how's your back? And he said, Still in pain.

And I said, Well, let's pray for you before you go. And as we prayed, we specifically prayed also for his back. And much to his amazement, and our delight, the Lord healed his back.

And he suddenly felt the pain was gone, and he had this renewed sense of strength. And with the strength, suddenly he realized, Wait a minute. Jesus is Lord.

He's not just someone I've read about in the Bible. He's not just someone that has come into my heart so I can go to heaven when I die, but he really is alive, and he's real, and he's in me, and he's here, and he's now. And if he can touch my body in this way, then he can protect me from whatever I have to go through.

And if I have to die, he says, Okay, now I'm ready. I'm really ready, because I really know that he is the resurrection and the life, and I can face anything now, because I know who he is and what he's done in me. And so he went forward with a renewed sense of confidence and courage.

You see, what he had discovered was he was a champion all along. He had just not seen it and seen the truth for himself. For in fact, in Christ, that is the truth of all of us.

Every one of us in this room who has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is a champion. Because as Romans 8, 37 says, in all these things we are what? More than conquerors through Christ. So if Christ is in you, he is the conquering king.

Resident in you. And as you allow him to exercise his rule and reign over you, you can rise to the occasion and stand as a champion against whatever opposition comes your way. Whether it be personal, or corporate, or whatever it might be.

You can stand strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Because while on the one hand you have human weakness and limitation, yet on the other, you are mighty in spirit. But you've got to see the truth

for yourself and know it as it is in fact.

But right now, most of us see and hear the giants in our life. And we see and hear the thoughts and feelings of our own human weaknesses and limitations in contrast to the giant. And so we'll walk through the life of David.

This is really a day in the life of a champion is all we're looking at here. One day in the life of a champion. It happens to be that his name is David.

And what happens in this man's life? Well, let's look on. So we skim on down here and I'll hit the high points of the story. So what happened is that David's three older brothers were assigned to fight in the battle.

They were soldiers under King Saul. And so they were part of this group that had gathered and were there on the battlefield to face Goliath and the Philistine armies. Well, David's father Jesse said, you know, I'd like to know how my boys are doing and I'm concerned that they might need a little nourishment.

So he said, David, come here. And David was the youngest and he had been out working with the sheep. And he said, I want you to go and check on your brothers for me.

See how they're doing. Here, take some food with you. Make sure they're well fed, cared for and just give me a report.

And so off David goes and he arrives at the scene of the battle. And there, of course, are the armies gathered. And so David comes up and he sees his brothers and he salutes them.

Not one of these salutes like we think of, but a salutation, a greeting. And so he says, greetings, brothers. And here I am.

I've come to see you and whatever. And they see he's got some food and that's good. You know, he's just a dumb kid, but he did bring the food and that's a good thing.

So they like that. So they're having a little conversation and Goliath shows up. Uh-oh, Goliath shows up.

So, verse 23. 1 Samuel 17, 23. And as David talked with them, behold, there came up the champion.

Now notice, he's called the champion. This giant is noted as the champion. Now in verse 4 they said a champion, but here they call him the champion.

Maybe it was the level of intimidation that he had imposed upon them for some 40 days that they had been there hearing him day after day after day as he kept right in their face bearing down on them and beating them down with his words and with his intimidating presence. But nonetheless, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, he spoke according to the same words. In other words, he said basically what he had said before.

Give me your best man. Let's have combat here. We'll have a one to one and the best man win.

Well, David heard all this and all the men of Israel heard it too, the soldiers. Now what did they do this time? We saw what they did last time. What did they do this time? Pretty much the same thing.

He says when they saw the man they fled from him and were sore afraid. Now let's go back before we get into that phrase to the first time it says they saw him and of course they saw him every day, but these are the two accounts. Verse 10 he says, I defied the armies of Israel and verse 11 when they heard him.

So the first time it's when they heard him they responded with dismay and great fear. Now this time it says when they saw him they fled from him and were very afraid. Very afraid.

So they both through his words and his physical presence they're indicating to us here that this put the fear in them and they're running scared and most of us live our lives running scared. And most people knowing that that's the case will find ways to manipulate others through fear and intimidation. You've probably been around parents, family members, teachers, employers and that's how they operate.

They control you and manipulate you through fear and intimidation. But once you know who you are in Christ and once you know that you're more than a conqueror none of these things move me can be your statement even as the Apostle Paul once said about all that came against him and believe me he had a bunch on his plate. Well going back here verse 23, 24 they saw the man they fled from him and they were very afraid.

Very much afraid. So what we tend to do instead of facing the opposition we run from it. But then again if you don't know who you are and the source of your true strength and power you will naturally run from it and wisely so because in reality none of us are big enough and strong enough to deal with the giants in our life regardless of how big they might really be or if they even exist at all for that matter.

You know Jesus explained how we should respond to these giants in John chapter 7 verse 24 In John 7, 24 Jesus said Judge not according to the appearance but judge righteous judgment. Now the word judge there we think of judge as more like a courtroom and there's the judge sitting. But he's talking about making an evaluation and he's saying now look Jesus says if you want to be able to face life and walk through life the way God intends you to function and be able to find fulfillment and meaning in life you've got to do so by not making your evaluations or assessments about things based on how things appear to be.

Now it is true that they appear a certain way and yes you do have to count the cost and you've got to see that this guy is a big giant and yes you've got to see he's well armed and yeah of course he has a loud voice and a very influential sound that comes out of his mouth and it's very convincing and you've got to recognize all that for what it is but then that's all there is to it.

We might just say it's just more hot air just a lot more of it but it's just more hot air let's just accept it for what it is don't judge by righteous judgment but get God's assessment of the situation what does God say about this what does God's presence mean to you in the situation how big is your giant but then again how big is your God great are you Lord and we sing songs about his greatness and they saw him and they were afraid and so they ran but then David he takes a different approach now they came back though in verse 25 they began to talk to David and they said now look have you actually seen this man have you are you are you telling me you've not really seen this giant for what he is and David says oh I've seen him for what he is it's just David saw him in a different light he

saw him in light of the Lord in light of the greatness of his almighty God but nonetheless they said well look don't you have any idea what's going to happen to the guy that takes down this giant he's going to be wealthy he's going to be blessed and prosperous I mean the king is going to give him all kind of good stuff

he's going to provide him with with possessions and power and then on top of that he's going to as far as his family he's going to bless his family I mean if you ever wanted to make dad proud boy here's your chance son just go take down the giant and your daddy's going to think you're the greatest thing ever I mean you know fathers get all excited when their kid wins a ball game but my gosh you've taken down the giant you've taken down the champion you've done the deed you

are the winner you're the hero par excellence that's you you're the man you're the man but what does David say about all that now this is amazing this guy and let's be clear about this the likelihood is David's about 16, 17 years old he's quite young here he's not he's not a guy that's been around the block very long but he has a lot of sense about him and of course if you study the Psalms you'll understand why verse 26 David spoke to the men that stood by him saying and I want you to be very careful in this verse because if you're not looking at it right you're going to think he's asking them a question but he's not because they've already answered the question so he says what shall be done to the man that kills the Philistine and takes away their reproach from Israel what shall be done

to him but what about who is he that is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God he says wait a minute you've got this all wrong you're looking at what we're going to get out of it you're looking at how we're going to benefit from it or how it's going to help us or help our people but he says what about God who cares about God in all of this who cares about the fame of His name who cares about the glory of His kingdom who is going to stand against the wickedness of this world on behalf of Almighty God who's going to take a stand and honor Him with your life or are we all going to be closet Christians and I'm not talking about running around evangelizing I'm talking about standing up and being a man a man of God a woman of God just being true to Him

and His character His nature honoring Him with your life and let the chips fall where they may so David says don't bother me with this stuff that's immaterial to me there's only one concern I've got here and that's the name of my Almighty God and the impact it has on His kingdom he says don't you understand they are defying the armies of the mighty God of Israel they're coming against Him and it's like you know when I was growing up parents of my father and others their thinking was this you touch my family you touch me you come against them you're doing it to me and so David knew you come against God's family you come against the nation of Israel you're coming against God Almighty and he said I'm not going to stand by idly on this one he said I am prepared to step up to the plate if need

be and if I must I will be the first to go but be assured he said I'm not going to sit idly by and watch this giant swagger around here in all his armor and brag about how great he is and how crummy we are and how loser God we've got you know and all this and this was kind of a common game that was played among the heathen anyway because they knew that the Israelite people revered and honored their God and took Him very seriously it wasn't like these other gods of convenience that the other nations had that were designed to make them look good or feel good no they recognized there was something different about the attitude of the Israelite people toward their God and therefore every chance they got they wanted to put God down now if you don't think that's true just look around society

today I got an email this week in the country of Great Britain just recently a man or woman who had been foster parents for years but had taken a few years off to take a break and then decided we're ready to go again and they went back and they had to reapply but this time as they were evaluated they said well we see here you're Christians and your views on morality on homosexuality on other kinds of lifestyles and practices we believe are not in the best interest of children so because that you are a Christian and you

adhere to the word of God you're disqualified see you don't count anymore you're out and society now is pitting good against evil and calling evil good and good evil and so what they're really doing is they're rubbing it in the face of the Lord God and they're as it were

trampling underfoot the blood of Christ and somewhere somebody must stand up to that and again I'm not talking about marching to some group I'm just saying let your light shine and bloom where you're planted and let the Lord be glorified in your life in the simple daily everyday things and let them see who Christ is and what He can do that's what the world needs and that's what they're looking for so David is serious about this and so the word got out and his brother first of all found out his older brother Eliab and he was very upset now it's interesting about that because the older brother is the one that should have got the birthright and the blessing and should have been the one appointed king but instead David got that that amazing privilege and I don't think Eliab had ever gotten

over that and so when he heard his brother talking again he just got enraged just like wait a minute you know it's one thing for him to be at home it's another thing for him to be anointed by Samuel as the next king and all that that's well and good but now he comes on the battlefield and that's where I'm the expert and now he talks all this big talk and so he gave him what for and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks so he says I know your pride and the naughtiness of your heart but in reality what we're seeing here is Eliab's pride and the naughtiness of his heart and that's so often the case with us we hear someone else who actually truly honors the Lord and we sort of despise them I was gathered with a group of ministers once over a meal and they were asking me what had

been going on and I shared some things about that God had been doing in my life in our ministry and about opportunities I had had to lead people to the Lord and such and there was a waitress that came to the table and was asking about different things you know like they do what do you want for the meal and such and I noticed she had a name tag and I called her by her first name and made some conversation later she came back and along the way I made some reference to the Lord and so afterward one of these pastors said to me how dare you come in here like this and talk about God like that in front of all of us and it's like you think you're better than us and you're trying to put us down and then you dare to call this woman by her first name and he goes on and then he said and you know he

said all these pastors were offended by you and I said dear brother I said I don't understand where you're coming from or what you're talking about but here's one thing I know I did not come in here to offend anybody and if in fact that was offensive then I'm most sorry I do apologize and I will go to every one of those pastors personally and talk to them and so I did and every one of them to a man said no we were not offended in fact we were inspired encouraged and challenged but this one man was offended because like Eliab here there was an undercurrent perhaps of jealousy pride who knows what perhaps really just conviction God was speaking to him you know you need to honor the Lord in a more prominent way than you have who knows but the point is we can't cater to what other people say

and so David just simply said verse 29 what have I now done is there not a cause he says don't you know I have good reason to do what I'm doing and say what I'm saying he said the cause let me tell you what the cause is the cause is the glory of God it's the kingdom of God it's the fame of His name that's the cause you have missed the point here my brother he says to him you think I'm out here just talking a big talk because I'm some dumb little kid I know God he says and I care about God in this my concern is about His name His honor His glory and then David turned immediately and began to talk again to some of the others the same thing he was trying to rattle the troops as it were to let them say look let's step up to

the plate he was saying champions arise champions arise and so

Saul sat before him and David came and David just makes this bold statement to Saul in verse 32 let no man's heart fail because of this giant your sermon will go now up to that point he hadn't really said he was going to go but ok you've asked me and he says I'm here to tell you if need be I'm ready to go I'm prepared to put my life on the line for God and His kingdom I'm prepared to go and so Saul looks him over and he says well you're just a kid look at you he says you are not able to go against this Philistine now here's how it works out in your life over and over and over again there are people telling you what you can't do they're telling you what you're not capable of they're telling you how weak or inadequate you are how incompetent you are how uneducated you are all the reasons

why you are not qualified to be a champion and so David respectfully listens to the king after all he is the king and he hears what he has to say and then David responded verse 34 he says your servant kept his father's sheep now he said let me just tell you where I've been king and I'll just explain to you why I'm saying what I'm saying he said I was keeping my father's sheep and there came a lion there came a bear they came against me they tried to destroy my father's sheep and I took them down one by one because God enabled me God empowered me I saw what God could do against a lion and against a bear he said I know God and I know what God can do and I know what He has done in my own life I've seen it in these things gradually here a little and God gradually builds us up in life and he

said I've seen what God can do and so therefore I have confidence not in me but in the Lord confidence in the Lord and so he says now if God took down the lion and the bear through me and on my behalf he says what's one more giant? he says what is this Philistine to God? he says he's nothing God is bigger than the giant that's all he's saying and besides he says in verse 36 he has defied the armies and this time he adds of the living God of the living God you see all the other gods were not living gods they were idols false gods but he says my God is the living God and because he is alive he is here and now and he is a living presence a force to truly be reckoned with and so then that's enough for Saul he's heard enough so Saul said unto David verse 37 go and the Lord be with you see now

he's figured it out he says okay I can see you're convinced I can see you have met the Lord and know the Lord and you've seen what God can do so more power to you as it were but may the Lord be with you and then and then he did what every well-meaning person in your life has done for you he then starts telling you if I were you this is what I would do and believe me they're not you and they don't know what you should do now accept all their advice gratefully take it into consideration carefully but hear God and what he says you should do and so King Saul immediately said now here you need to take my armor and I'm going to arm you and you need all of this and as soon as you start trying to add to God the things of man and the resources of man it's not God plus the stuff of this world that

he needs he may or may not use it but it's up to him to tell you what he wants and when and how he wants to use it and so as soon as David had all the armor on he began to realize it doesn't fit you know there's a simple little saying if the shoe fits wear it God told me that when he first called me and showed me and made me a minister he said the reason you're not comfortable in this position you're about to take a marketing manager of this oil refining company is because it doesn't fit you it's everything you thought you wanted and dreamed of but it's not you and David knew this armor doesn't fit this armor is not right for me God has not sanctioned it his stamp of approval is not upon it and therefore he took it off and you know the rest of the story he went on he picked up five smooth

stones that's what he had done before with the lion and the bear and he walked out and he faced Goliath the giant saw him he was enraged how dare you embarrass me and make fun of me by sending this puny little kid out here to face me I am the man I am the giant I am the great one and you dare to bring me this little why this is no contest and he was so furious he said I'm going to tear you limb to limb you little punk he said I'm going to show you what for I'm going to do it right here and now so he really really tried to intimidate David but David wasn't fazed didn't faze him a bit I've heard you before you know but then I've heard God and I know whose voice to listen to my sheep hear my voice Jesus said and they know me so tune in to the voice that matters in your life and focus on

knowing him that you might cultivate a relationship with him in such a manner that you might flow in the moving of his spirit in your life and see what he can do and so David stood up to that Goliath and he said look I'm going to tell you how it is you told me you were going to tear me limb to limb verse 45 David said you have come to me and you've got your sword and your spear you've got all your great weapons and your armor and you're the champion alright so you think but you've got all the stuff the world says a man's got to have to be a real man he says ok so be it but he says but I come to you with one thing I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts the name of the Lord of hosts the true and living God that's what I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts the almighty God

and he is the God of the armies of Israel and you have defied him you have defied him and I come to you in his name to come in his name means to come in his presence his power his strength to come on his behalf yes but more than that because as a new creation in Christ to come in the name of the Lord to pray in the name of the Lord is to call upon him who is in you and to acknowledge his presence and power to work through you it is a dependency attitude at the highest this day he says will the Lord deliver you into my hand he says you told me what you're going to do now I'm going to tell you what God's going to do he says this day you're going down God's going to deliver you into my hand he said I'm going to smite you I'm going to kill you I'm going to put it into you once and for all and

he said I'm going to take your head from off of you I'm going to behead you the head is the symbol of power and authority it is the focal point of control the intellect and he says I'm going to behead you and that's going to be the final proof that you're nothing but a blowhard you're gone you're over and then he says in verse 47 and all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with the sword and spear for the battle is the Lord's the Lord does not save with sword or spear for the battle is the Lord's you see God has an army of champions of men and women who know the source of their strength who are willing to tap into the source of that strength and who are willing to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might with the utmost confidence even as Shadrach and Meshach

and Abednego if I go through the fire and I'm burned to pieces so be it but I will go in the name of the Lord and for His honor and glory for the fame of His name I will go into the fire and fortunately for them His presence was there He sustained them and brought them through it just as He did with David and so sure enough Goliath went down just as exactly he said he would so David ran toward the giant he didn't run from him as the others but he ran toward him after all he had said and after all of his sure force and the flex of his muscle and all of his big weaponry and David ran at him straight toward him and took that sling and with one smooth stone of faith brought down this mighty giant the stone didn't kill that giant God Almighty brought him down and put an end to him and then the

people recognized the greatness of God Almighty and He was the one who was glorified that day so David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone and he smote the Philistine and killed him and

there was no sword in the hand of David let's be clear about it David was a man of faith and his trust was in the Lord calling all champions if you're in Christ you're more than a conqueror you can be a champion if you'll stand strong in the Lord and the power of his might who will stand against the Lord in this evil day let's pray Lord God I thank you for your awesome presence and power praise you Lord that while we can see the greatness of man and the various achievements of mankind and clearly they are in many ways astounding and remarkable but only what you have done is truly

amazing Lord you are amazing and your grace is amazing and I thank you Lord God that you would take weak frail humans like ourselves and impart your awesome life into us transform us from a sinner into a saint cleanse us from all unrighteousness forgive us of our sins and give us new life in Christ and in future your strength power and ability so that we might rise up as men and women of the living God that we might rise up as champions and know that no matter what face what we face in this life that you've made us more than conquerors through Christ and that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us and we thank you Lord this day for renewed strength and courage Lord for renewing our mind to get clear and be focused on the greatness of our God not just far removed from us

not just in history past but in dwelling us by the spirit of the living God within us Lord we thank you that you have made us great in you you have made us great because you are great in us and you are the source of our greatness of our strength of our ability and I thank you this day Father that you will cause us all to be willing to be true champions as we walk through life to just let our light shine to let others see who you are what you can do and most of all just to let you be yourself in us I love you Lord and thank you for your marvelous life in Jesus name.

Amen.

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