

REHEARSE YOUR VICTORIES

It has been my great privilege these past many years to share with our ministry partners, messages that I believed to be God inspired. While I consider many of my articles to be poignant, given our current economy, this particular message is quite timely. Many prognosticators are comparing our present financial condition to the "Great Depression", and one need not look too far to see headlines like: "Obama: Catastrophe coming if rescue isn't passed," or Obama Warns of turning a "crisis into a catastrophe." It seems as if the media is intent on bombarding us with bad news. Consuming large doses of this type of negative (and not necessarily truthful) information can lead Christians to make decisions based on fear and not on faith. This is certainly not what God expects of His people, and as His children, we need to look to and meditate upon His word... "for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success" (Joshua 1:8).

Today's headlines pale in comparison to the news that must have been emanating from the Israeli Army as they attempted to battle the Philistines and their champion Goliath. As this drama unfolds, the two armies stood facing each other on opposite mountains with a valley between them (1 Sam. 17:3). For 40 days Goliath drew near morning and evening. I suspect that these twice daily displays of strength were designed to intimidate Israel and produce fear. These twice daily displays remind me of what many now experience when reading the morning paper or watching the evening (negative) news. Israel was frozen with fear due to the enormity of the opponent (1Sam 17:11). I can imagine that grumbling and complaining were rampant and that Israel was ready to give in to the enemy and ultimately become servants to the Philistines (1 Sam 17:9).

But God had a different plan for His people. David showed up and convinced King Saul to let him fight mighty Goliath. David showed no fear as he approached (it says he hurried and ran toward the Philistine) his enemy and prevailed over him with a sling and a stone! (Keep in mind that Goliath was approximately 9' 6" tall and David was a youth). This inspired Saul's army to chase down and defeat the fleeing Philistines and later plunder their tents!

As I again read this remarkable story I am astonished by David's courage in the face of what seemed like sure defeat. This led me to ask: where did his courage come from? How could he be so confident that he would win? As Christians, can we operate in this same degree of certainty? These answers are found by studying David's life and considering why he was successful.

1) David remembered. When Saul countered David's plea to go and fight Goliath by saying 'you are not able' David quickly reminded himself and Saul that **the Lord had already delivered him** out of the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear. As you face the giants in your life, are you frozen with fear, or are you mindful of the times in the past when the Lord has met and delivered you?

2) David was aware of his covenant with God and the benefits of this covenantal relationship. He referred to Goliath as 'this uncircumcised Philistine'. David knew that he was a child of the most high God. He was convinced of God's willingness to intercede and deliver him safely. Are you aware of your covenantal benefits as a Christian? Is Jesus your source, your deliverer, your healer, your salvation?

3) David rehearsed his victories. "I come to you (Goliath) in the name of the Lord of Hosts"... "this day the Lord will deliver you into my hand". WOW, what incredible boldness! David spoke to the enemy and confidently exclaimed his desired result. Is your Goliath sickness? Lack of finances? Addiction? Depression? These are curses, and the Bible teaches us that we have been redeemed from the curse of the law. Therefore we can speak boldly, knowing that in Christ we are **already victorious**.

4) David was offensive, not defensive. Not only did David charge at his enemy, but after he slew him he pulled Goliath's sword from its sheath and cut off his head (1 Sam 17:51). Do you have your armor on? How are you responding to the taunts of the enemy, frozen with fear or bold in faith?

David wrote in Psalm 16:8 "I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved." Brothers and sisters, if you set the Lord before you, you, too, can boldly declare "I shall not be moved", not by the media, nor by the economy, nor by any deception of the devil..."therefore my heart is glad, my voice rejoices and my flesh shall rest in hope." (Psalms16:9)

ARISE

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