

**Keys to Victory**  
1 Samuel 17:26-50

**Preface**

Life can be scary. We face many challenges and hardships. One can sense the peaks and valleys of life in words of the Baptist Hymnal. Songs range from “On Jordan’s stormy banks I stand” to “Victory in Jesus”. The words often reflect life’s discouraging moments as well as the victorious times.

The Bible tells Christians how to be victorious in life. It teaches us with direct instruction, parables, fascinating stories and account after account of believers who have been victorious because of their faith. Today we will look at one such account.

There was a 40 day standoff between the Philistine army and the army of Israel. Each day Goliath would come out to the line and repeat his battle cry. He would dare any single man to stand up against him. The army of Saul was in terror as they looked upon what appeared to them as a human tank.

Goliath was 9 feet tall and had 125 pounds of armor covering his entire body with the exception of his face. He carried a javelin and a spear with an iron point that weighed 15 pounds.

Each day he taunted the Israelites by daring one of them to come out and fight him for the battle. But the men were in fear and ran from him, including the brothers of David.

David’s father sent him to the battlefield with food for his brothers. After dropping off the food, David heads to the battle line to see what is happening. David finds Goliath making his daily challenge and the army of Israel cowering down in fear.

**Scripture**

*<sup>26</sup> David asked the men standing near him, “What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?”*

*<sup>27</sup> They repeated to him what they had been saying and told him, “This is what will be done for the man who kills him.”*

*<sup>28</sup> When Eliab, David’s oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, “Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I*

*know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.”*

*<sup>29</sup> “Now what have I done?” said David. “Can’t I even speak?” <sup>30</sup> He then turned away to someone else and brought up the same matter, and the men answered him as before. <sup>31</sup> What David said was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him.*

*<sup>32</sup> David said to Saul, “Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.”*

*<sup>33</sup> Saul replied, “You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth.”*

*<sup>34</sup> But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. <sup>36</sup> Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. <sup>37</sup> The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”*

*Saul said to David, “Go, and the LORD be with you.”*

*<sup>38</sup> Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. <sup>39</sup> David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them.*

*“I cannot go in these,” he said to Saul, “because I am not used to them.” So he took them off. <sup>40</sup> Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd’s bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.*

*<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. <sup>42</sup> He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him. <sup>43</sup> He said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. <sup>44</sup> “Come here,” he said, “and I’ll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!”*

*<sup>45</sup> David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. <sup>46</sup>*

*This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>47</sup> All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands.*

<sup>48</sup> As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. <sup>49</sup> Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.

<sup>50</sup> So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.

## **Introduction**

There are some important lessons to be learned from this chapter in the life of David. Before we look at the keys to victory, I would like to point out something in verse 43, “*And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.*”

The next time you curse and use God’s name in vein, think about Goliath and the company you are among. God chose to include this in His word to remind us of just how low one is when we choose to use such language and use God’s name in vein. Consider that a mini sermon within a sermon but give it some thought.

David’s victory over Goliath was against all odds. Let’s reflect upon the keys to David’s victory and how we can apply them to our life.

## **Content**

### **1. Must have a clean heart & clear mind**

For a Christian to be victorious he / she must have a clean heart and a clear mind. We must confess and repent from our sin.

Illus: This year I will have been married 29 years. My wife loves me and I love her. Neither of us is perfect and we both make mistakes. We both have moods and different personalities. However, we each require complete loyalty to one another. Now I don’t have a problem with women trying to flirt with me but if I did, my wife would not stand for it. She requires my complete loyalty and dedication to our marriage. I can’t be partially faithful or partially committed.

The same is true with our relationship with God. We cannot give God part of our life while withholding other areas and expect to see the

power of God in our life. We must confess ALL sin before God. We must have a clean heart before Him.

Too many people go to God with one specific crisis in their life. But God doesn’t intend to address your crisis until He addresses your heart. God desire to hear about all of you and wants you to have a clean heart and clear mind.

You might think you are in pretty good shape. You may think to yourself, “I don’t steal or cheat and I haven’t murdered anyone.” But we must search our hearts much deeper than that. We much search our hearts for any impurity like bitterness, dishonesty, unforgiveness, lying or deceit.

Goliath fell facedown dead on the ground because David first fell facedown alive before God. To be victorious, we must bring our hearts to the throne of God and confess all our sin before God. It was David who wrote “*Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.*” Read Psalm 51 entirely to understand David’s sincerity in confession.

It is only when we have a clean heart before God that we can have a clear mind. We must remove the junk from our heart to have the guilt taken from our minds.

When fighting life’s battles, we need a clean heart and clear mind which comes from being totally honest to God.

### **2. Must have a pure motive**

In 1 Corinthians 3:18, Paul writes “*Do not deceive yourselves.*” The first time I ever read that I was perplexed. I could see how one can deceive others but how does a person deceive themselves?

Illus: I remember when I was a child and got in trouble for something. In order to avoid punishment, I told my Mother and stepfather a lie. Like the country song, that was my story and I was sticking to it. As the days, weeks and months went by I had to work hard to stick to the story and keep my lie consistent. It would have been much easier to just take my punishment but I chose to keep telling my lie. Years later I was thinking back on the matter and I was remembering it not as it happened but as I had told it so many times. Then one day it occurred to me that I had told the lie over and over to the point I had not only deceived others but I had deceived myself.

You see we can convince ourselves that something is the right thing to do when deep in our hearts we know it isn’t. We must not deceive

ourselves. We must be honest before God and we must make sure that what we are doing or desire to do is truly God's will.

It is important that with every challenge and with every desire that we search our hearts for God's will. We must ask ourselves if this is really what God wants us to do.

This is such an important step. If God is with us, who can be against us? On the other hand if God is not with us, we are destined to fail.

How can anyone Pastor a church if they are not confident they are doing it because it is God's calling? How can anyone teach Sunday School or AWNAs or serve in any other area of the Lord's work if they are not doing it for the right motive? If our motives are not for God, we will soon become discouraged and fail.

Illus: I mentioned last week that Jason and Misty purchased their first home. I always get a kick from talking to someone who had just been through their first real estate transaction that involves a mortgage. We laughed as we talked about the enormous stack of papers you have to sign for everything imaginable. Usually the very last paper you sign says if for some reason they made a mistake on something or left out a document, you agree to come back and sign anything else they need. It is a daunting experience and one must be confident when agreeing to everything.

As we face the challenges of life, it is important that we validate our motives and insure that we are doing what God would have us do. In everything from our business dealings to our personal decisions to our ministry for God, we must be sure God is in it.

Pray and seek God's confirmation. If God is not in it, don't attempt it. If it is God's will, consider it done.

### 3. Must see the challenge clearly

Another key to victory is that we must see our challenges clearly. In other words, we must see our challenges for what they really are. Too often we worry about things that never come about. At other times, we fail to see the significance of a problem and underestimate the consequences.

David saw Goliath differently than every other Israelite soldier. No one else saw Goliath the way David did. Others looked upon Goliath and saw a human tank that was sure to crush them.

But David looked upon Goliath saw a big bag of hot air full of himself. David didn't see power in Goliath because David understood the power of God. Notice some of the things David says...

*"<sup>26</sup>Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"*

*"<sup>36</sup>...this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God."*

*"<sup>45</sup>You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD."*

*"<sup>46</sup>This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head."*

Can you have the level of confidence that David had against his adversary? You bet you can. We must see our challenges clearly. We must look at our obstacles in light of the power of God and we will see them differently; we will see them for what they really are.

In light of the resources and power of God, our obstacles are not overwhelming. We know there can be victory through our Savior. But, we must look at our challenges as David did.

To be victorious, we must see our obstacles for what they really are and know that God is able. Too often Christians run from the threats of Satan. We cowl down and say we can't afford it or we can't do it.

If your heart is clean and your motives are of God, then let God lead you to victory.

### 4. Must have a surrendered faith in God

Was David more equipped or better trained as a soldier than the rest of the army? Absolutely not! There were men there with many years of training and experience at battle. But David was more equipped with faith than any man on the battle field that day.

David's focus was more on God than it was on Goliath. While everyone else was in awe at the size and armor of Goliath, David was in awe with God. David understood the difference in living a life for God and living a life without God or partially committed to God.

Acts 4:13 says, "<sup>13</sup>When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."

In order to be victorious, we must be with Jesus. God is eager to do great things, victorious things in our life if we will just surrender with complete faith in Him.

We know more than just this story about David. We know David had his ups and downs but he always sought to have a heart for God. David wrote in Psalm 51:10, *“<sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”* KJV The NIV translates *“<sup>10</sup>Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*

When we completely surrender our heart to God He will renew a steadfast spirit within us. God will give us the ability to face the most challenging problems and see us through them. But we must have a surrendering faith.

Illus: (Show picture drawn by Maddie.) A precious little girl in our church who always gives me a hug and says in an angels voice “Hey Brother Bob” gave me this picture last Sunday. It says “to Bro. Bob, God is Good.” It’s ironic that this week as I was driving down the road, God gave me this sermon and the closest thing I could grab to write on was this picture sitting on the front seat. I began to make notes of what I might say in the message. Later at the office as I concluded the message I started to discard the picture and notes when I took one more look at the picture. It then occurred to me this is the kind of faith God wants us to have in Him.

God desires for us to have a childlike totally dependent faith in Him. He wants us to surrender everything. Hold back nothing and you will discover what God can do.

## **Conclusion**

God doesn’t have favorites, God has intimates. David was an intimate with God. His heart was clean, his mind was clear, his motives were pure, he viewed his challenges clearly and his faith was strong.

What about you? Are you sitting around looking for favors from God? Or, do you desire to be intimate with God?

Are you willing to surrender yourself to Him?

Are you willing to have a daily walk with Him and discover the victorious life?