



Honest to God

David: Profiles of an Authentic Life

Session 4 – Authentic Courage

What defines courage? It's the stuff of action heroes and thrill seekers, but might just as easily be found in a hospital bed or soup kitchen. As US Senator and former POW John McCain puts it, courage is "that rare moment of unity between conscience, fear, and action, when something deep within us strikes the flint of love, of honor, of duty, to make the spark that fires our resolve."

David was on a common errand for his father when the flint was struck. He could hardly believe what he was hearing. Goliath was a tower of wrath and no one confronted him. David saw it. Instinctively and against all odds, David took charge and stood up to Goliath.

Goals for this Session:

- Discover what made David a courageous warrior.
- Consider ways to develop and strengthen our perspective of God.
- Examine how giants assault faith, and let God's Word shape our response.
- Pray honest prayers that instill courage and engage in spiritual combat.

Ice Breaker

If you were to identify one thing in your life as a "giant," what would it be?

Day One – The Big Picture

Read **1 Samuel 17:1–58** to get the overall picture. Follow the story line closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this chapter give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this chapter and how you can apply it to your life.

Day Two – Fear Breeds Fear

Read 1 Samuel 17:1–30.

Saul and his men were in a tense standoff with the Philistines. Both armies camped on opposite hills with a wide gulf between them. With their spears, swords, and iron-wheeled chariots, the Philistines had the military advantage. But the steep ravine made a full-scale assault impractical. So the Philistines brought out their deadliest weapon: a giant named Goliath.

1. Describe Goliath’s challenge and conditions of combat. Who, if anyone, might the Philistines have expected to take their crazy dare?
 - a. How did Saul, the people’s choice for a king to lead them in battle, respond?

2. David reaches camp just in time to see the troops “going out to the fight and shouting for the battle” (verse 20 NKJV). He knows nothing about Goliath yet. David drops everything and runs to where his brothers are. What would he be expecting to see?
 - a. Describe what he actually *did* see.

 - b. Every morning, Israel and the Philistines would go up on the ridge and face off, army against army. They shouted, fist-pumped the air, and positioned for battle. If thirty days makes a habit, forty days of staring at Goliath conditioned them to give up without a fight. When we face situations that seem insurmountable, where can courage be found?

Psalm 56:3–4

Isaiah 41:10

3. David went around the camp, looking for someone to take on this “uncircumcised Philistine” who was mocking the Lord. Why did David’s brother find his remarks so irritating?

4. There will always be Eliabs in life. In other words, we can expect pushback for doing the right thing. When you are maligned for standing in faith, what does God want you to know?

Matthew 5:11–12

1 Peter 4:14–16

Hebrews 12:2–3

Memory Verse

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
Psalm 27:1 ESV

Think it over . . .

What do the metaphors of light and a stronghold show me about God's character and attributes?

Day Three – Overcoming Obstacles

Read 1 Samuel 17:31–39.

David caused enough of a stir in the camp that word got back to Saul. At last, someone was willing to face the dreaded Philistine. David didn't have to wait long for an interview with the king, as no one else was applying for the position of Israel's champion. But he certainly wasn't what Saul had in mind.

1. Saul takes one look at David and dismisses any thought of sending him into combat. In your estimation, was Saul's response to David scornful, skeptical, or just sensible?
 - a. What reason did David give to convince Saul that he was able to fight Goliath?
 - b. What was it about David that persuaded Saul to give him a chance?

2. David's boldness was more than youthful overconfidence. Past experience taught him that God would be strong for him. David's habit of recalling God's faithfulness was a continual source of courage for him. Is it for you? Share a past example of God's faithfulness and how it gives you strength today.

3. David was ready to face Goliath but there were obstacles to overcome. His brother ridiculed him and Saul said he was no match for the enemy. But David knew where strength is found. Courage is not the absence of fear—it is refusing to give in to it.

Read what David wrote and explain the connection between prayer, praise, and courage.

Psalm 28:6–8

Psalm 138:3, 7–8

Memory Verse

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
Psalm 27:1 ESV

Think it over . . .

What light does God want to shed on my circumstances? Do I look at what everyone else sees? Do I see what God sees?

Day Four – An Accurate View of Giants

Read 1 Samuel 17:40–47.

Day 41. Goliath pulled his nine-foot-six-inch frame out of bed and got ready for work. He had a giant breakfast, put on his 125-pound suit of armor, grabbed his helmet and oversized spear, and lumbered out of his tent. Just another day for a giant. Shout the usual taunts, violate a little more territory, and be back to camp in time for lunch. But on this particular morning, while Saul's men hang back, a fresh-faced young man moves toward the giant. *This battle is over before it even begins*, Goliath thought to himself. It was the only thing he got right that day.

1. Everything about Goliath was intended to demoralize and intimidate the army of Israel. He dominated the battle. He dictated the terms. That is, until David arrived. Why was David unfazed by Goliath's threats?
 - a. Perspective is everything. Saul's men couldn't get beyond Goliath's size. David saw the physical giant also, but his focus was on the King of the universe, mighty in power, not to be trifled with. You don't defy the God of Israel and get away with it!

Because David habitually kept a sense of awe for God and His glory, that's the lens he looked through when a trifling giant came along. Where and in what way did David acquire his perspective? How can you develop a perspective like David's?

2. How to spot a giant: (Check all that apply.)
 - a. Giants are belligerent and loud (verse 8). _____
 - b. Giants distort truth (verses 8, 26: “servants of Saul” vs “armies of the living God”). _____
 - c. Giants are liars (verse 9: “we will be your slaves”). _____
 - d. Giants relentlessly harass (verse 16). _____
 - e. Giants threaten and intimidate (verse 44). _____
 - f. Giants... (add your own to the list) _____

3. A giant can be anything that drains your faith or challenges what you know and believe about God. When you find yourself facing a giant, what does God want you to remember?

Isaiah 54:17

Zechariah 4:6

2 Timothy 1:7

Memory Verse

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
 The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
 Psalm 27:1 ESV

Think it over . . .

What fears tend to fester in my thoughts? Today I will stay focused on the Lord by . . .

Day Five – Courage Breeds Courage

Read 1 Samuel 17:48–58.

David went out to fight Goliath—not to get rich, or get a wife, or make a name for himself—but so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel who saves.

1. It’s been said that life is 10% what happens and 90% how you respond. Think about that when a giant is towering over you. Are you facing an impossible problem or are you staring at a great opportunity to make God known? What inspiration can you draw from David’s example?

**“Courage is not simply one
 of the virtues.
 It is the form of every virtue
 at the testing point.”**

**C.S. Lewis
*Weight of Glory***

2. Do you find yourself digging more into God’s Word and prayer when you are facing a giant? Why or why not?

3. Share a favorite verse that you go to when you need to draw courage from the Lord.

Memory Verse

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
 The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
 Psalm 27:1 ESV

Think it over . . .

Is someone I know presently going through a fearful experience? In what way can I be light at the end of the tunnel for them?

After His Heart

“The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.” —2 Chronicles 16:9 NLT

“God found in David a man who would stand in the gap, a man whose heart was fully committed to Him. Will He find that in you?”

Greg Laurie

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests
