



MY STORY, HIS GLORY | CHAD BRUEGMAN

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer these two questions:

If you could change your first name to something else, what would it be and why?

SHARE

Welcome to our series “Battle Tested.” Throughout this series we are taking a look at some stories of people in the Bible who were battle-tested. We all go through battles at different times and for different reasons. As we walk through these stories, our hope is that we can learn from each one and gain a better understanding of the wisdom, strength and sustaining power of God.

In the word of God, we find stories where God makes a promise to an individual or to a people, and then many times there is a gap between the time the promise is made and the time it is fulfilled. There are also times when God’s people received a promise, yet that was just the beginning of the fight. We can find ourselves fighting battles when times are tough; and also when we are experiencing success, we can be faced with brand new fights and pressures we never imagined.

As we go through this series, allow God to speak to you about your life and the battles you might be facing. What God calls us to is always worth the fight. Maybe your battle is working tirelessly on building a better marriage, struggling to live a life of purity, fighting to be ethical and honest at work, digging deep to forgive someone. Whatever the fight might be, we must always cling to the promises of God and remember that He can lead and sustain us.

This week, Chad talked about what it means for us to confront our giants. For us, the giants are anything that mocks us or stands contrary to the word of God in our lives. The business of confronting giants isn’t an easy task if it is done in our own power. It’s by God’s power and in his name that we take on the giants. The giant’s battle is to steal, kill, and destroy anything that reflects the glory of God. This is especially true for us, as we are made in God’s image! As we look closely at the epic story of David and Goliath, there are some unchanging truths we can meditate on.

As background, the Philistine army is facing the Israelite army and between them is the Valley of Elah. Both armies are waiting for the other to attack, so that they would then have the advantage of the higher ground. At this point in the story, they were at a standstill. Goliath, the largest and greatest Philistine warrior, came forward daily to mock the Israelites and not one would step forward to fight as they were terrified; including King Saul, who would have been the best match to take on Goliath. In what seems like the darkest moment, a shepherd named David arrives to deliver food to some of the men and realizes what is really going on.

Let's read 1 Samuel 17:32-40

What were Saul's initial thoughts about David taking on Goliath?

What was the one reason why David knew Goliath was going to be defeated?

David chose to use unlikely weapons. Why? What does this say about David?

G R O W

There was only one Israelite warrior who saw clearly what was really happening on the battle field. Goliath wasn't defying the Israelites, but the God of the Israelites. David knew that the sword and spear were powerless against the name of the Lord Almighty. This battle wasn't just about David and the Israelite army behind him; it was about God's power and his Glory.

Let's read 1 Samuel 17:41-58

In Warren Wiersbe's *Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*, we see how this isn't David's first battle. It is a bigger, much more public one than he has fought before; yet it is still the same God who sustains him:

David arrived with provisions for his brothers, and immediately he was interested in the challenge of the giant. Note that his own brethren accused him and tried to discourage him; Satan always has somebody to tell us "it can't be done." Even Saul tried to dissuade him: "You are not able" (v. 33, NKJV). Well, in himself, David was not able, but in the power of the Lord he could overcome any enemy. (See Phil. 4:13; Eph. 3:20-21.) Saul tried to give David some armor, but since he had not proved it, David refused the armor. Imagine Saul telling somebody else how to have victory! David had proved the power of God privately in the fields caring for his sheep; now he would demonstrate this power publicly to the glory of God. Note how throughout this entire episode, David gives glory to the Lord.

The practical lesson here is that God gives victory in response to our faith. God had tested David privately with a lion and a bear; now he was to test him openly with a giant. If we are faithful in the private battles, God will see us through the public testings. Too often God's people faint at the smallest test that comes their way, little realizing that the "little tests" are but preparation for the bigger battles that are sure to come (Jer. 12:5). David used simple, humble weapons: a sling and five stones (see 1 Cor. 1:27-28 and 2 Cor. 10:3-5). David knew how Gideon was given victory with weak weapons, and he knew that Gideon's God was not dead. Neither his brothers' criticism nor Saul's unbelief kept David from trusting God for victory. The stone hit its mark; the giant fell down, and David used the giant's own sword to cut off his head! This one victory opened the way for Israel to attack the Philistines and spoil their camp. "And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith" (1 John 5:4, NKJV). We are "more than conquerors"!

Prior to stepping out onto the battlefield, people tried to discourage him. Often the enemy will find ways to discourage each of us from engaging in a fight. Have you experienced this?

David privately experienced God's power and love for him as he spent time as a shepherd. Why do you think spending time with God is so essential in relation to building our faith?

MOVE

David understood that his story wasn't all about him; it ultimately pointed to God's glory. One of the most important things that seems to be often misunderstood is that we are included in the story of God's glory. Our story and our lives are of the utmost importance to God. He doesn't bypass us for his own glory; his great love works together for our own good and his own glory at all times. Our redemption points to the great redeemer. Our freedom only points to the freedom giver! It is all of his amazing attributes that point to his glory! Because of God's kindness, patience, sacrifice, and steadfast love, we can have a relationship with him.

From the Scriptures, it is clear that David deeply understood God's love and provision for his life. So when he had to take on a fight, it was in God's power and always for God's glory. David had great faith because he knew he served a great and powerful God! We can see this in David's own reflection on God as a shepherd.

Read Psalm 23

David understood that it is God who leads, guides, prepares, calls, provides, and pursues us with his love. His story is for God's glory and the end game for David is that he will get to be with God for an eternity and dwell in the house of his Lord.

David knew that no giant, however big, could defy his God. David could step onto the battlefield because he knew that his God was all powerful and all loving. How many of us are hesitant to confront our giants because deep down we really don't trust God's love for us? Understanding that might change everything. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into ladies and gents groups to go through this last question.

If you could identify the giant you are facing today, what would it be?

- Shame
- Condemnation or Self-Condemnation
- Comparison
- Insecurity
- Control (kids, money, comfort, safety)
- Fear
- Envy/Coveting
- Lust
- Addiction or Self-Medicating
- Anger
- Other

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

TO GO

Psalm 23:2-3

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.