

The David Series: Week 2 Devotions

In week 2 of the David Series we explored how David faced a giant on the way to fulfilling his destiny. This week our devotions have been adapted from a YouVersion devotional reading plan by Louis Giglio called ***Giants Must Fall***. As you revisit the story of David and Goliath you will learn how to overcome the giants of fear, rejection, comfort, anger and addiction.

Day 1: DEAD BUT STILL DEADLY

Read:

"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings." (1 Peter 5:8-9)

Engage:

The epic tale of David and Goliath is one of the most well known stories in the Bible. On one side of the Valley of Elah stands the Philistine army, with their nine-foot-tall champion named Goliath. On the other side of valley stands the Israelite army, cowering in fear under the leadership of their king named Saul. For forty days Goliath has been taunting the Israelites and holding them in the grip of fear. Day after day he has been challenging them to send out one soldier to face him man to man. But so far, nobody has volunteered.

Perhaps you can relate to the situation of the Israelites. Some kind of giant is standing before you, taunting you, harassing you, and insulting you. Maybe it's fear. Maybe it's anger. Maybe it's a feeling of rejection. Maybe it's the sneaky but all-too-familiar giant of comfort that compels you to live for something lesser. It might even be an addiction.

Whatever this giant is in your life, day after day it has been robbing you of power. You've tried to stop the taunts, but you feel immobilized. Held back. Paralyzed from moving forward. Ultimately, you know you're not living the fullness and freedom of life that God intends for you.

The good news is that God has made a way for these giants to fall. It starts with believing that even though the giant you're battling might be big, it's not bigger than Jesus. In fact, He has already defeated the giants in your life. When He came to this earth, He endured hell for you on the cross and rose from the grave so you could shake off the prospect of a doomed life. He came to set you free from the giants who rise up against you and hold you paralyzed in fear.

Jesus has already overcome the enemy. However, as we read in 1 Peter 5:8, the devil still "prowls around . . . looking for someone to devour." In many ways, he is like a snake with its head cut off. When you kill a snake, you have to be sure to bury its head, because even after death the serpent holds a lethal dose of venom in its fangs. If you step on a dead snake's head, you can still get poisoned. In the same way, even though Jesus broke the power of Satan at the cross, he can still inject his deadly poison into our lives. He is dead but still deadly.

The goal then, as we will discuss in this study, is not to step on the snake's head. In practical terms, this means resisting the devil (see James 4:7), equipping the defenses Jesus has provided (see Ephesians 6:10–18), and leaning into his sufficiency (see Proverbs 3:5). It means remembering that you can never bring down giants through your own courage, willpower, or efforts but through Jesus you will bring the giant down.

If you truly want to see victory over the giants in your life, you need to understand your dependency on the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ. Victory is all about trusting in Christ and not about trying to succeed. To take the first step against your dead-but-still-deadly enemy, you've got to make this paradigm shift in your mind. Christ is the only force that brings change.

Respond:

- (1) How do you respond to the idea that Jesus has defeated the giant in your life? What are the implications of this for the way you live your life?
- (2) Jesus came to earth to crush the power of sin and death, and he has already overcome the enemy. What difference does this make as to how you view the giant in your life?
- (3) What are some ways you go about drawing close to Jesus so that you won't step on the venomous head of your defeated enemy?

Day 2: FEAR MUST FALL

Read:

"But now, this is what the LORD says – he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: 'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.'" (Isaiah 43:1-2)

Engage:

When you read the story of David and Goliath in the Bible, one of the first things you notice is that the Israelite army was "dismayed and terrified" of the giant (1 Samuel 17:11). Goliath started each day with taunts and ended each day with taunts. As time went by, all that demoralizing and diminishing had an effect on the Israelites. They began to believe in spite of their best efforts, something undesirable was going to happen to them . . . their defeat.

This is basically the definition of fear—the belief that something is out there that is going to get you that you can't do anything to stop. This fear can manifest itself in many different ways—anxiety, nervousness, worry, stress, dread, hopelessness, panic, to name a few—and can spring up in your life from a variety of sources. Perhaps you experience fear as a result of the environment in which you were raised. Maybe your family treated life like one big threat that never diminished. At any minute, something could go wrong . . . and it probably would.

Or perhaps you experience fear as a result of trying to conceal mistakes and imperfections in your life. You are ashamed of something you've done in the past, and you worry that one day it will be made public and brought to light. Or perhaps you experience fear as a result of trying to control too many things in your life. You've realized that most things in life are out of your control, and this makes you fearful about what will happen in the future.

The giant of fear can get a foothold in your life and begin to dominate you. It can demoralize you and ultimately diminish God's glory in your life. It can chew away at your life, erode your sense of confidence, rob you of sleep, blind you, and steal your praise to God. Fear is a relentless giant. And it is one that must fall through the power of Jesus.

The solution to facing the giant of fear is not determination but faith in Jesus. It isn't so much saying, "Fear, go away," but confessing, "I have confidence that Jesus is bigger than this giant and has already defeated it." In Romans 10:17, Paul states, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (NKJV). When you see and hear God in and through his Word, the Word allows you to see and hear that He is bigger than your giant. That builds up your faith, and your faith in turn becomes the stone that shuts up the giant that's already defeated.

So today, identify the source of your fear and place it in the hands of Jesus. Remind yourself that with God all things are possible (see Matthew 19:26) and he is able to overcome this giant. Remember that Jesus has promised to always be with you (see Hebrews 13:5). Name what is keeping you up at night, and then offload those cares to the One who has promised to care for you (see 1 Peter 5:7). Then fill your mouth with praise because you see God's might, recognize his love for you, and know that he will always come through. His mercy will never fail (see Lamentations 3:22).

As you do this, even though the cause of your fear may not be removed, you will be actively relegating fear to its proper place: into the hands of Christ.

Respond:

- (1) The opposite of fear isn't courage but faith. What does faith in Jesus involve when you're up against the giant of fear? What do you need to believe? What do you need to do?
- (2) What helps you become convinced that God is bigger than your fears and has overcome whatever you fear?
- (3) What role do praise and worship have in dealing with fear? Why are they so important?

Day 3: REJECTION MUST FALL

Read:

"The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." (Romans 8:15-16)

Engage:

David was just a teenager when he arrived at battle between the Israelites and Philistines. He wasn't a member of the army, but was just delivering supplies to his brothers. As he got to the camp, he heard Goliath's taunting—and asked who was going to take him down. His brother didn't appreciate his inquisitiveness. Note the text: "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?'" (1 Samuel 17:28).

This response isn't surprising if we know the rest of the story. In 1 Samuel 16, we learn that when the prophet Samuel came to Jesse's house to anoint a new king for Israel, Jesse started with the oldest, Eliab. Eliab was the biggest, oldest, and strongest of the brothers. Surely he was going to be the new king. But God said, "Nope. Not him." Undoubtedly, Eliab felt spurned. The system seemed upside down. He wasn't chosen as king. Instead, the youngest brother was—the kid who wasn't even in the lineup. Eliab felt rejected, and rejected people reject people.

None of us like to feel we aren't good enough. Or smart enough. Or wanted enough. As much as we wish it weren't so, the opinions of others matter. A word of rejection, even something small that wasn't aimed to hurt us, can stick and sting. A tiny seed of rejection can take root and wreak havoc in seasons to come. Before long, we forget God miraculously created us for a purpose and a plan. We forget that he doesn't ask us to compare ourselves to others or run someone else's race. We lose sight of our miraculous beginning and our re-creation in the person of Christ. Before long, we find ourselves tormented by this giant of rejection.

Experiencing Jesus' victory over the giant of rejection comes from seeing yourself the way that your heavenly father sees you—as his dearly and loved child. As Paul wrote, "If we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (Romans 8:17). God did not accept you because of anything you had done, but just because he loved you (see 1 John 4:19). What's more, God loved you so much that he was willing to pay an enormous cost to bring you close to him: the death of his own Son, Jesus, on the cross.

Imagine Jesus today whispering in your ear, "I really, really love you. I am already pleased with you!" It might feel crazy to think the God of heaven—the creator of the universe—knows you so personally. Many of us freak out when we get thirty likes on a social media post. Yet the God of the universe is mindful of you (see Psalm 8)! He has pursued you (see Luke 15:3–7).

Before you were even conceived, God went on record and said, "I choose you as my own." That truth should cultivate a sense of acceptance within you. Your worth isn't wrapped up in what you achieve but is forever anchored in the fact that Jesus was given for you. You were made to be accepted and embraced by your heavenly Father. You were made to be loved, for free. You live from his acceptance, not for the acceptance of others. As you come to realize this, the giant of rejection will fall in your life.

Respond

- (1) What reasons do you have for feeling deeply accepted by God? Which of them are already prominent in your thoughts? Which are not?
- (2) In what sense can you say, "God chose me"? What does this mean to you? Why is it so important?
- (3) What's the difference between living for acceptance and living from it? How can you put this into practice?

Day 4: COMFORT MUST FALL**Read:**

"Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.'" (Mark 8:34-35)

Engage:

It may seem odd to think of comfort as a giant—as something that taunts us and hurts our lives. We all desire to provide a safe environment for our family. We like to kick back at the end of the day with our shoes off and watch a fun show on TV. We like things to be orderly in our lives, not chaotic. None of these things are deadly in and of themselves. The trouble only arises when the desire for safety and security becomes the dominant theme of our lives.

In the story of David and Goliath, we see how this desire stymied the nation of Israel. The Israelites issued their battle

cry every day. They got suited up and went to the front lines. They had God on their side. But for forty days they were prevented from moving forward by the lure of ease. Goliath would come out each morning, and the Israelites would say, “Not today. Too dangerous. Let’s stay in the tents where it’s safe.”

The picture we miss in the story is that David came on the scene and did in one day what the army of Israel hadn’t been able to do for a month and a half. Every day they had been wavering. Every day their comfort held them back. Every day the giant kept coming and coming and coming. Then David showed up and said, “This is nuts. This is going to end today.”

God wants you to likewise see beyond comfort and recognize there is something of eternal significance for you to contend against. He is calling you to a greater purpose than what mere comfort can provide. He wants to give you real influence. He wants you to walk in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. He wants you to step out in obedience to his will. He is inviting you today to gear up, rally around his battle cry, and engage the enemy.

Gaining the victory over the giant of comfort means answering this call. It means refusing to wait for “all the pieces to line up” before making a move. It means being willing to go in a direction that doesn’t feel familiar at first. It means understanding that what matters most is moving in God’s strength instead of your own. As soon as you grasp that, you’re ready for the battle. You’re ready to be put in the place where you can witness God’s deliverance.

Remember that faith thrives in discomfort. The cross brought pain to Jesus in the same breath that it brought freedom to you. It’s often easy to just sit back and decide to follow the example of another person’s life—to let someone else who is “called” to go and take the risk. But the reality is that God hasn’t called any of us to avoid the dangers of a lost and dying world. Instead, he has called us to enter into it with the sword of the Spirit in our hands. He wants us to say, “We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work” (John 9:4 NLT).

Your life on this earth is short . . . but God is big. So focus on matters of eternal significance while you are here. You live on a planet with billions of people who’ve never heard of Jesus. As a follower of Christ, you have the hope. You have the truth. You have the life. You have Jesus. That’s what matters: letting Jesus be known. So step into the fight in the name of Jesus!

Respond:

- (1) On a scale of 0 to 5, how important is comfort to you? Why did you answer the way you did? How does your desire for comfort play itself out in your daily life?
- (2) Can you see any areas in which your desire for comfort is limiting what you might do for God? If so, what are those areas?
- (3) What might it look like for you to get out of your comfort zone in order to serve God in some way? How do you feel about that? How can you proclaim Jesus with your life?

Day 5: ANGER MUST FALL

Read:

“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.” (James 1:19-20)

Engage:

In the story of David and Goliath, we don’t see a lot of anger coming from David. What we do see is a lot of angry people around him. One such individual, as we have seen, was his older brother, who “burned with anger at him” (1 Samuel 17:28). Eliab should have been supportive of David when he arrived at the battlefield. But the anger in heart had been simmering for some time, waiting for the opportunity to erupt. And erupt it did.

Anger isn’t necessarily wrong in and of itself. The Bible reveals that there is a time to be angry and a time to rightly express your anger (see James 1:19). Jesus even felt anger at times (see Mark 3:5). However, anger becomes a giant when it works its way into your life and simmers under the surface, just as Eliab’s simmered under the surface.

One way to know this is happening is if you feel angry about something that never happened. Maybe you thought a friend did something against you, but in reality he or she never did. Your anger was wrongly felt. Or perhaps you have a genuine reason to be angry but express it in the wrong ways. Like Eliab, your pent-up anger rages out and damages

people. Or perhaps you have rightly felt anger but fail to express it. Repressing your anger poses huge health risks and is truly one of the most destructive things you can do.

So, how do you overcome this giant called anger? How do you experience the victory that Jesus has already won over it? It begins by recognizing lasting change seldom arrives instantaneously. More often, God morphs your life little by little. The key to real change in your spiritual life is to consistently fill yourself up with faith—and continually link up with what Jesus is doing within you. Read God's Word and substitute your anger with the truths you find there. Replace the angry conversations you are having in your mind with prayers for the people who have wronged you. Align yourself with God's will and invite Jesus to have full reign in your heart.

It helps in this regard to remind yourself that you aren't perfect. God forgave you, so you can forgive others. God made peace with you through Jesus on the cross, so when you are angry, rally back around the cross.

Understand that God is your avenger, and he has freed you to make peace with others. Recognize that what he did for you is greater than what anyone could ever do against you. By Christ's power, it is possible to forgive those with whom you are angry—and release the pain that has been poisoning your life.

It is also important to remember you are a son or daughter of God. Remind yourself of this fact daily. You may have been rejected by others and made to feel insignificant, but in God's eyes you are loved, safe, secure, and significant. Let Jesus' voice speak above the other voices that are trying to be heard in your life.

In the end, taking down the giant of anger is really about letting go of control. So do as David did and focus on God rather than the people who have wronged you. As you do, you will be freed to move forward in God's power and do what he has called you to do.

Respond:

- (1) What would you say is a healthy way of dealing with your anger? What is your usual way of dealing with anger?
- (2) What helps you know that you are a loved son or daughter of God?
- (3) What does it mean to think of God as your avenger? How does this help you not hold a wrong against another person?

Day 6: ADDICTION MUST FALL

Read:

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." (1 Corinthians 10:12-13)

Engage:

When David volunteered to fight Goliath, King Saul told him, "you are not able" (1 Samuel 17:33). He went on to explain that David was no match for the giant because he had "been a warrior from his youth." When David failed to be persuaded not to fight, Saul attempted to cover him up with his own armor. He wanted David to suit up so he would look stronger and more protected than he really was.

We do the same in our own lives. We feel powerless in a broken world and wide open to attack, so we put on false armor and hide in addictions. The sad reality is that we are an addicted generation. We may not think of ourselves as addicted, but the truth of the matter is most of us have something in our lives that we feel we can't live without—whether it's alcohol, relationships, shopping, accomplishments, drugs, adrenaline, or even social media. We're enslaved to that thing and can't break the habit of going to it when we feel vulnerabilities surface.

The giant of addiction can rob you of God's best for you. It can lead you down a never-ending path to a never-fulfilled promise. In the end, it will stand over you, ridiculing you and dimming the fame and glory of God in your life. So, how can you realize Jesus' victory over this giant?

The key is to look past the symptoms of the addiction and focus on the cause. Ask yourself questions such as, "What is the source of the chaos in my life? Why do I feel so inadequate? Why do I fear being known? Where is the pain coming from?" Unless you're willing to look for what is causing your problems, the giant of addiction is not going to fall.

Most of us follow a pattern where, when we feel vulnerable to attack, it makes us feel weak. This weakness, in turn, compels us to cover up and cope. And when we try to cover up and cope, we run to an addiction. Fortunately, there is a solution. Instead of running to an addiction when you feel the need to cover up, run to Jesus. Know that whatever vulnerability you are feeling, Jesus won't push you away. He accepts you in his love and infuses you with his life. He exchanges your weakness for his strength. When you are vulnerable, Jesus is ABLE.

Perhaps the greatest lie when facing your addictions is that you can wage the battle on your own, hidden from view. Always remember that freedom happens in the light. Jesus is the Light of the World, and he works most powerfully in you when you bring your brokenness and hurt into the light of his grace. You are free in Christ the instant you place your trust in him. But it may be that you need to call on those standing close by to help unravel the layers. Do whatever is necessary to weave your life into a system of openness, honesty, and accountability.

In the end, David refused to be covered in Saul's armor. He put aside all the trappings that Saul tried to weigh him down with and chose instead to rely only on the Lord. He went out to fight the giant armed with only his sling, his rod, and his God—and he took Goliath down. This is the template for our living, and as we look only to God for strength in our vulnerabilities, the giant of addiction will fall in our lives.

Respond:

- (1) What are some situations that tempt you to put on false armor to protect your vulnerability? Why is it so attractive to deal with pain and vulnerability through an addiction?
- (2) Why is it often so hard to turn to Jesus in our weakness rather than to an addiction?
- (3) Why is it essential to tell trusted individuals about your addiction and get their support in breaking free? How would you know if someone was a safe person to confide in about an addiction? What are the character qualities of a safe person?

Day 7: FORWARD TO VICTORY

Read:

"The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." (Psalm 23:1,4-5)

Engage:

At the end of the story of David and Goliath, we read, "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" (1 Samuel 17:50). In a matter of hours, a shepherd boy armed only with a sling and his faith in God took down a fearsome giant that had been taunting the Israelites for forty days. Your Shepherd, Jesus, will do the same in your life if you allow him (see John 10:11).

In Psalm 23:5, David states of the Lord, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies." Jesus, your Savior, promises to lead you, guide you, and protect you . . . not in the absence of your foes, but in the very presence of your enemies. As the pressures, the darkness, and the struggles of your giants close in around you, your Shepherd spreads a feast of provision right there in the midst of the battle. He gives you everything you need to not only survive but actually thrive as you navigate the path to freedom.

The Bible states that Jesus is not only your Good Shepherd but also the Lion of Judah (see Revelation 5:5). His roar rules the nations. His voice shatters the enemy. But for a short while, Satan has been allowed to prowl and look for cracks through which he can insert himself into your mind. If you don't stop him, then he will be the one sitting at the table. And if he's at your table, then he will work to erode your confidence in God. He will try to tell you that you are all alone in the fight and that you have no chance of seeing your giants fall.

At such times you need to agree with David, who—in spite of witnessing plenty of adversity in his life—could state with confidence, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me" (Psalm 23:4). David knew God had everything under control. He recognized during the dark times that God was on his side, walking through the valley with him. You can have that same trust, but only if you refuse to allow the enemy a seat at the table.

This is because if the enemy is at your table, he will try to convince you that you will not make it. He will work to spin

your head around and remind you that you're surrounded and everyone is out to get you. He will tempt you with thoughts that there's something better at another table and that God is holding out on you. You have to choose instead to believe that your Shepherd promised to lead you through the valley, that he is always with you, that he knows what is best for you, and that you are his beloved child.

So today, take a seat at God's great table. Sit down, be still, and just enjoy the presence of your heavenly Father. Go to him whenever you are weary and heavy-laden, for he has promised to give you rest (see Matthew 11:28). Focus less on the enemies who are surrounding you and more on the fact that he is there with you. Move forward into the victory that he has for you—and watch as one by one all the giants in your life fall.

Respond:

- (1) What barriers keep you from moving forward into victory? How do you look at Jesus' place in your battles?
- (2) How has Satan attempted to work his way into your heart and your thinking? How does this affect your view of your circumstances?
- (3) How has Jesus provided for you during difficult struggles? How can keeping your focus on Jesus help you overcome the giants surrounding you?