



gracefellowship

Goliath *Must* Fall
February 28, 2021
Comfort Must Fall

Introduction: Welcome back- or welcome in- to our teaching series “Goliath *Must* Fall.” We are taking a look at the very real battle that historically took place between a shepherd boy named David and a giant named Goliath in the Valley of Elah thousands of years ago. From the story we are then taking the liberty to say we have giants in our lives that we face and which, through the power of God fighting for us, need to be removed from our lives so that we can live in the victory that Jesus has won for us through the cross.

So far we have looked at the giant of fear and the giant of rejection. Those are two mean giants that we’ve said can easily get a strangle hold on our lives and keep us pinned down rather than moving in the freedom of faith. Today we are going to look at a giant that doesn’t appear mean and scary at all! In fact, probably no one in this room has ever even thought of this as being a giant. If you’re reading Louie Giglio’s book along with the series this may have seemed like a strange chapter to you, but I want us to talk today about the power of a sneaky giant we face called “Comfort.”

We face a sneaky giant called comfort.

When you hear me say the word comfort you may think, “That sounds like sitting on the coach under a warm blanket and eating a bowl of ice cream while watching Netflix! Sign me up for that!” And to be fair, there is nothing wrong with occasionally taking some down time and resting to enjoy the pleasures of God. But here is where the problem comes in:

Comfort can quickly lead to complacency.

The giant of comfort doesn’t sound at all like something that’s going to grab you by the throat and hold you down to beat you into submission, does it? Instead, the giant of comfort is more likely to invite you remain on your coach, stay on the sidelines and never venture out into God’s great adventure for your life.

When we think of comfort we probably have thoughts of...

- physical comfort
- financial comfort

It's not wrong to desire a safe and comfortable home to live in. It's not wrong to think about your financial future. It's wrong to make comfort our god. When we elevate comfort over following the voice of Jesus we start to understand the power of this giant to ruin our lives. God has more for you in the adventure of faith than creature comforts and a strong 401K.

:: Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

When God rescues us out of our sins and brings us into His family He invites us to be part of the work of His Kingdom. It's a work to introduce others to the marvelous saving faith available to them in Jesus.

- It's being invited to serve the local church in ministries...
- It's finding ways to serve in our community and show the love of Jesus...
- It's adopting a child, feeding the homeless, protecting widows, and loving your neighbors.

Comfort will invite you stay inside and neglect the work God has for you. When we look at the story of David and Goliath, Goliath may have been taunting the army of the nation of Israel, but the giant of comfort was keeping them from engaging in the battle and taking what God had planned to give them.

:: 1 Samuel 17:20-24

20 Early in the morning David left the flock in the care of a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry.

21 Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other.

22 David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were.

23 As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it.

24 Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear.

The Israelites would line up for battle every day and shout their war cry standing on the hill overlooking the Valley of Elah.

Hebrew War Cry: Rak Chazak!

This comes from the book of Joshua when God was about to send his people into the promised land to take the land He had given them. There were 31

nations established in the land and God was sending them in purge the land of these people groups so Israel could inherit what God had promised to Abraham. As Joshua was preparing for battle God met with him and repeated this phrase 3 times: Be strong and courageous! Be strong and very courageous!

I've thought a lot about what I might do if I were even going to get a tattoo and I think this would be it: Rak Chazak! Be strong and courageous! But I'm afraid it would hurt and I don't like pain and discomfort, so I'll probably never do it!

The Israelites would stand on that hill day after day and shout the war cry, but then Goliath would step forward and shout his defiance, calling them to send a man to fight him. What happened? They all fled in great fear! "Be strong and courageous!" Became... "Back to your tents!" Back to comfort. Back to safety.

Illustration: Friday the 13th prank.

All the testosterone and energy my friends could sum up didn't do them any good when then masked assassin came running out of the barn! They fled in terror back to the safety of the camp fire!

When David showed up at the battle lines to deliver bread to his brothers he heard the defiance of Goliath. He wasn't about to let this giant scare him because David had a right sized view of God! David knew that God was bigger than the giant. We need to remember the same thing. When something is in front of you and is scaring you away from following God in obedience it's often because we see the uncomfortable situation and think it's bigger than God. We need to remind ourselves that God is bigger than any situation we face!

- That's why it is important for us to be reminded each week of this series that in our story facing giants we are not David!
- Jesus is David! Jesus is bigger than our giants and He is the one who we need to invite into our situation and take down the giant that is keeping us from walking in obedience to God.

God isn't calling us to be comfortable, but to be faithful!

Illustration: Jesus in the garden

The most uncomfortable thing we see in the Bible is the Son of God hanging on a cross to pay for our sins. It wasn't comfortable for Jesus to go to the cross. In fact, on the night he was arrested he spent time praying to His Father, "If there is any way this cup can pass from me, please let that happen. But not my will, but yours be done."

"Comfort and familiarity are not what God points us toward. Jesus isn't in the business of flying to and fro for the rest of our lives, hand-delivering spiritual baby food to us." – Louie Giglio

There is an interesting passage in Luke's gospel about a man wanting to follow Jesus:

:: Luke 9:57-58

57 As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

58 Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Question: Will you follow Jesus even if it's uncomfortable?

Illustration: Traveling to India

I did a Pastor's conference one time in India for about 200 Pastors. These were men who walked or rode buses- some of them from hundreds of miles away to be equipped to lead their churches. The guys I traveled with spend the nights in the compound where the conference was hosted. All three of us shared a room and slept on what basically amounted to a nice cot. We had air conditioning, but it wasn't what any of us would call "nice accommodations."

One night I couldn't sleep- a mixture of jet-lag and an uncomfortable bed- so I went out to walk around the compound. I never even thought about where the men who were attending the conference were staying or what their sleeping arrangements were. When I walked outside I found the answer to that question. Within the compound were some large rooms with concrete floors and steel beams supporting the structure. The men were sleeping right there on the concrete. No bedding. No pillows. No blankets. They were sleeping in the clothes they had worn that day on the hard ground. I saw one man who had to be in his 70s laying up against the steel beam to support his head.

I thought of that passage from Luke 9: Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head. These Pastors were following Jesus even when it meant getting some training required them to sleep outside on concrete slabs. I thought about pulling all the chairs out of this room today and making everyone sit on the ground. That's a good way to make people leave your church, because we all want to be comfortable. We complain if it's too hot or too cold in here.

Here's what the giant of comfort doesn't want us to know:

Faith thrives in holy discomfort!

Why is that true? Because being uncomfortable causes us to rely on God!

Illustration: Gideon's army

In Judges 7 God is going to send Gideon to war against the Midianites. But God tells Gideon that his army is too big. If they win they will just say it was by their own power and they were saved through their own strength.

- Anyone who is afraid can leave

- 22,000 men left
- Anyone who drinks from the water by getting down on their knees can leave
 - Only 300 were left

God decides to go to war with only 300 men under Gideon's command! It was uncomfortable for Gideon to watch his army walk away, but God wanted him to live by faith and see the power of God on display.

As a church right now we are asking people to fast or practice self-denial from one thing that is important to you and when you are drawn to that thing or when you crave it, to pray between now and Easter. The reason is we want to focus on our faith and see God's hand of provision to grow our faith and that happens when we are uncomfortable!

During this season we are fasting to focus on our relationship with God. In April we will invite you into another time of fasting for the purpose of our relationship with others.

Then in June we will do one final season of fasting asking God to put our focus on bringing the good news of Jesus to the lost.

These things can make us uncomfortable- and that's the point! When we are uncomfortable we reach for Jesus.

:: 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,

4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

5 For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

So where is Jesus calling you to move in faith even if the giant of comfort is calling you to stay on your couch?

- A conversation you've been putting off
- Joining a Life Group
- Starting a new ministry
- Serving a neighbor
- Following God's call to be a missionary or a Pastor
- Being discipled
- Being baptized
- Walking away from something that is comfortable, but unhealthy

Write down what it is right now the Holy Spirit is impressing on your heart to do to step out of comfort and into faith. Don't miss this moment. Then do something even more bold than writing it down- tell someone about what you wrote down and ask them for accountability to do what God is leading you to do.

Life is short but God is big! He is inviting you not to waste one more day of your life by retreating to a place of comfort when you can lean into Him and bring glory and fame to His Name as you do the things He has called you to for His Kingdom in this world. The giant of comfort must fall!

- Pray