

Matters of Life Series
FACING LIFE'S GIANTS
By Steve Chupp
April 11, 2010

The Big Idea

Matters of life matter to God. In fact, God works through all the matters of our lives to prepare us for a great future. What we see as life's irritations and difficulties are actually the very circumstances God uses to build character and strength to face life's giants that are sure to come. The key to facing tomorrow's giants is facing today's lions and bears that come our way.

David and Goliath – 1 Samuel 17 NLT

1. Recognize that God places a giant in each of our futures.

- **1 Samuel 17:4** *Then Goliath, a Philistine champion from Gath, came out of the Philistine ranks to face the forces of Israel. He was a giant of a man, measuring over nine feet tall!* NLT
- **Your giant is an impossible assignment from God.**
 - It may at first appear as an enemy or messenger of destruction.
 - Or it may appear as simply a difficult life challenge that you can take or leave.
- You have to realize this is bigger than you.
 - **1 Samuel 17:26** *"Who is this pagan Philistine anyway, that he is allowed to defy the armies of the living God?"* NLT
- If you step out of the crowd and face your giant, you and those around you will be forever changed.
 - **1 Samuel 17:32** *"Don't worry about a thing," David told Saul. "I'll go fight this Philistine!"* NLT
- Facing your giant will result in a major victory that will affect many other people.
 - **1 Samuel 17:51-52** *When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they turned and ran. Then the Israelites gave a great shout of triumph and rushed after the Philistines.* NLT
- You can't face a giant until you have faced your lions and bears.
 - You can only successfully face your giant by learning the lessons and passing the tests that God sends you on the way to your giant.

2. Pass the test of lions and bears.

- There's a giant on the other side.
- You will never be prepared for the giant if you don't conquer the lions and bears.
 - **1 Samuel 17:37** *The LORD who saved me from the claws of the lion and the bear will save me from this Philistine!* NLT
- David's lions and bears
 - Actual/real/genuine outward life challenges that others may never see.
 - Every challenge in life comes with a purpose.
 - All of life is a test. (Rick Warren)
- **Facing lions and bears equips you with weapons for facing giants.**

- **Facing lions and bears equips you with weapons for facing giants.**
 - David used the same weapons on Goliath that he did on the lions and bears.
 - **1 Samuel 17:40** *He picked up five smooth stones from a stream and put them in his shepherd's bag. Then, armed only with his shepherd's staff and sling, he started across to fight Goliath.* NLT
- **Lions and bears are difficult assignments that God gives you.**
 - Or life serves you.
 - Lions and bears want to steal from you.
 - Lions and bears want to destroy you.
- They can easily go unrecognized.
 - They come dressed simply as tough circumstances of life.
 - Only later you may realize how significant they were.
- Lions and bears are your God-allowed life challenges to prepare you for the bigger ones, the giants to come.
 - The bigger ones matter to more people.
- What are your lions and bears?
 - Life's irritations
 - Life's temptations
 - Life's hurdles
 - First one in your family to go to college
 - Only Christian in your family
 - Breaking the line of addiction, poverty, or abuse in your family
 - Raising a two year old – or a very difficult or disabled child
 - Caring for an aging parent
- Can you see purpose in everyday life challenges?
 - It's not all about today.

3. Refuse to excuse defeat by personal disadvantages.

- David faced lions and bears against the backdrop of his own personal disadvantages.
 - Youngest of 8
 - Forsaken by his parents – on their part, willingly or unwillingly
 - **Psalms 27:10** *For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me up.* NASU
 - Overlooked in Samuel's visit
 - **1 Samuel 16:11** *Then Samuel asked, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse replied. "But he's out in the fields watching the sheep."* NLT
 - Berated by his brothers in this story
 - **1 Samuel 17:28** *But when David's oldest brother, Eliab, heard David talking to the men, he was angry. "What are you doing around here anyway?" he demanded. "What about those few sheep you're supposed to be taking care of? I know about your pride and dishonesty. You just want to see the battle!"* NLT
- David faced lions and bears against the backdrop of his own personal disadvantages.

- David faced lions and bears against the backdrop of his own personal disadvantages.
 - It wasn't fair.
 - He could have let the lions and bears keep the sheep.
 - It would have "served them (his family) right".
 - Instead he fought them off.
 - And wrote many Psalms in the midst of his loneliness.
- Two of our four most recent presidents came from broken homes with many disadvantages.
 - You may not agree with their politics, but you have to admire the way they faced their lions and bears.

What are your disadvantages?

- Legitimate inner life challenges
 - Family background
 - When I was chosen pastor, each of the other elders had stronger, healthier family backgrounds.
 - Addictions, poverty, divorce, abuse, abandonment
 - Personality – is actually never a disadvantage from God's plan
 - Physical disability
 - Learning disability
 - Your own past failures
 - Paul had to live down the fact that he was responsible for killing Christians.
- Disadvantages should serve as explanations, but never as excuses.
 - They explain why we are the way we are.
 - But they don't excuse us staying that way.
- **God compensates for disadvantages without removing them**
 - **Psalms 27:10** *For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me up.* NASU
- **Your disadvantages may limit you from doing some things, but not from doing God's plan.**
- Personal disadvantages can rob you of the inner strength to face the lions and the bears.
 - You have to look to a source outside yourself for strength – God.
 - That's a good thing.

4. Face your giants.

- Giants are larger than life – your life, that is.
- Giants are not only personal challenges but challenges we take on for others.
 - When you get to your giant, it is no longer just about you.
 - **1 Corinthians 16:8-9** *In the meantime, I will be staying here at Ephesus...for there is a wide-open door for a great work here, and many people are responding. But there are many adversaries.* NLT
- Facing giants is where you go public with what you have done in private.

- Facing giants is where you go public with what you have done in private.
 - Your economic situation may be presenting some pretty fierce lions and bears.
 - For some of you, it is committing to live on foreign soil in missions, perhaps bi-vocationally.
 - Taking on a small group and dedicating yourself to helping others face their lions, bears, and giants.
 - Overcoming every hurdle to reach the lost and unchurched
- Some giants are persistent.
 - David overcame Goliath in one battle.
 - But he had to overcome King Saul over a long period of time.

Facing my lions, bears, and giants

- I recognize that my lion of _____ is preparing me to face my future giant.
- I will not allow my disadvantage(s) of _____ to discourage me from facing life's lions and bears.
- My giant is related to my assignment to _____.
- As God is my helper, I will face my lions, bears, and giants. _____