

Week Three: *Grateful people act courageously*

1 Samuel 17

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. Read 1 Samuel 17. If this were all you knew about David, how would you describe him?
2. Conduct the same assessment of King Saul, David's father Jesse, and his oldest brother Eliab. (It might be interesting to go back and read 1 Samuel 16:6-7 regarding Eliab's words.)
3. David's offer was not made in a vacuum. Besides faith in God, what personal experience(s) gave him confidence to volunteer?
4. Read the description of a good shepherd in John 10:11-13. Why does a good shepherd risk his life for the sheep?
5. How might that also be a reference to Jesus? In what way was it different for Jesus?
6. How have your experiences changed your sense of courage? Has failure made you more or less courageous?
7. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray to recall and not forget all the ways God has enabled you to overcome past adversity. Don't hesitate to be specific.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

8. Goliath was the real deal. How did Saul compare David to Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:33? What is the point of that statement?
9. Are the challenges you face in life real, or mostly anxious thoughts based on what might go wrong? What's the difference?
10. Besides his own past experience, what else gave David courage? (1 Samuel 17:26, 46.)
11. Read the interesting words of Job in Job 42:1-2. Do you believe that or was that merely Job's opinion? Do you think that way also?
12. As Christians, we can look back not only on our personal experiences but also the historic record of the Bible. Read Romans 8:31-32. What difference does the cross of Jesus make when it comes to courage?

13. Do you have a sense God is prompting you to do something? Give it some thought and pray over it.
14. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray to have the courage of your convictions... that you would not be a Christian in name only but that others would know you by your words and deeds.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

15. Look again at 1 Samuel 17. David didn't go into battle without a weapon. What preparations did he make?
16. What was Goliath's assessment of David as a warrior?
17. What lessons can we learn from the success of David and the mistakes of Goliath?
18. In what way are you uniquely gifted to wage war against the enemy?
19. Why do you think Saul wanted to know who was the father of David? (See 1 Samuel 17:55-56, 58)
20. Are you your father's/mother's son or daughter? How are you the same? How are you different?
21. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for the lessons you've learned from your family of origin, good or bad.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

22. Skim through 1 Samuel 17 to refresh your memory. As Saul approached David in full battle posture in 1 Samuel 17:48, what did David do? What insight does that give you into David? Why is that attitude still important for Christians to emulate?
23. What were the weapons Goliath brought to the fight? Read verse 45-47. What was the chief weapon David counted on to win the battle?
24. When it comes to representing the Lord, is it more important to talk the talk or walk the talk? Explain.
25. What was the result of the battle in 1 Samuel 17:51-53?

26. Why do you think the Philistines fled the battle? Didn't they still have a fighting chance to defeat Saul's army?

27. Does anyone take courage from your example? Explain who and why.

28. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray to be a courageous Christian role model for others to follow.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

29. Name three things that have gone right for you this year.

30. Are you more focused on your blessings or your setbacks? Why do you suppose most businesses and coaches attempt to build on strengths rather than overcome their weaknesses?

31. How well do you know David? What were some of his weaknesses? Why do you suppose God chose him to become the king despite his flaws?

32. Are your weaknesses holding you back? Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. What important lesson did Paul learn that every Christian needs to remember?

33. Answer the age-old question, what would you attempt if you didn't consider failure a possibility?

34. What has kept you from making the effort to accomplish the "impossible goal" you just identified above?

35. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray that God's Holy Spirit would inspire you to great acts of courage in the days, weeks and years to come.