

Russell Kelfer That Quality called Courage

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Series: Living Legends II**

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That Quality Called Courage

I don't guess it's any surprise to any of us that the world doesn't look at things the way God does. The world doesn't look for the same kind of character strengths that God does. The world is looking for self-reliance. The world is looking for an aggressive spirit. But God, on the other hand, seems to have a special place in His heart for humility and patience. The world is looking for men and women with ambition. God is looking for men and women with servant hearts. The world is looking to be impressed with those who get. God, on the other hand, is impressed with those who give what they get away. So the marks of success that characterize what God is looking for and what man is looking for are not at all the same. They are 180 degrees the one from the other, with one exception. There is at least one character quality that both the world and the Word seem to honor. It is a quality called courage. It is one of the greatest exclamation marks secular history puts by the name of those that it places in its Hall of Fame.

History's heroes are, for the most part, men and women who, when faced with incredible odds, even the threat of death, actually saw their boldness increase, and their courage became the hallmark of who they were. In like manner, on the pages of Scripture seem to surface over and over the biographies of men and women whose true spirituality surfaced in an hour of great crisis, when this supernatural quality called courage became God's seal of greatness: Daniel in a lion's den, Moses in the presence of Pharaoh, Elijah on Mt. Carmel.

When the oven of life's crisis reached the fevered temperature of certain defeat, riding some kind of miraculous wave of internal supernatural power, these men and women demonstrated that quality called courage. That is the theme of this study as we continue to look at the life of David. This morning we come to perhaps the high point of his life, probably the high point of his life as a youth. What happened that surfaced this quality was the impending defeat of the Israeli army at the hands of God's

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enemies, the Philistines, who have in their possession the best the world has to offer, an overgrown warrior named Goliath.

COURAGE DEFINED

Let's begin, shall we, by defining the word. That is a good way for us to always begin when looking at any character quality, lest we be thinking in more than one direction. Courage. What is it? I looked in Webster's new, revised, expanded, illustrated, almost infallible dictionary. It says courage is the quality of being brave; valor.

Well, the dictionary may be expanded, but the definition isn't, so we keep looking. If courage is the act of being brave, let's look up and see what it says under "brave." Brave is 1) not afraid, 2) having courage. Not much help, is it? The American Heritage dictionary, which I'm sure is also revised, expanded, and illustrated, does a better job. It says this: "courage is the state of quality of mind or spirit that enables one to face danger with self-possession, confidence, and resolution." More words, so it's got to be better, right? It goes on to say, "courage suggests a reserve of moral strength on which one may draw in time of emergency." We're getting closer, aren't we? In other words, what the secular dictionary is saying is that courage is some kind of inner strength that emerges in the face of danger or seemingly impossible circumstances.

Biblically, we see courage with almost the identical meaning except that the strength can only come from one source. Biblical courage is not the result of self-reliance or self-confidence. Biblical courage is the result of surrendering to the sovereignty of an omnipotent God. The results, therefore, are even more dramatic because God is the one producing that quality called courage.

Perhaps one of the best places in Scripture to come to see this brought to reality is Joshua 1. We are going to touch on it now and come back to it later in the lesson. If you will remember in verse 1, you have the ingredients necessary, perhaps, for courage to emerge.

1- A deep, personal loss. Joshua has just lost his spiritual mentor. Moses was dead.

2- He faced a virtually impossible challenge.

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Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving them, to the sons of Israel. (Joshua 1:2 NASB)

3- The only valid source of strength.

No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you, I will not fail you or forsake you.

(Joshua 1:5 NASB)

So the basis of Joshua's courage was the presence of God in his life, the promise of God in his heart, and the power of God on his behalf. Now with that clear, in verse 6, God gives Joshua an order:

Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore [promised] to their fathers to give them.

Have not I commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you, wherever you go. (Joshua 1:6,9 NASB)

We'll return to that passage later in this lesson. But let me just remind you of some principles that emerge immediately. There are at least four of them from that passage.

1- To be courageous is an order. Therefore, it is a choice of the will, it isn't something you are born with. Some people aren't just born courageous. God only orders you to do what He empowers you to do, and He orders you to be courageous. It is a commandment. Remember that.

2- To be courageous is not an option. Not only is it an order, it is not an option. For God to be exalted and God's people to inherit the land, Joshua didn't have any choice. They either trusted God or they didn't trust God. The circumstances weren't going to change. Isn't that interesting? God didn't give them any option regarding the circumstances. The only option He gave them was whether or not to trust Him. If they chose to trust Him, there would be the incredible quality called courage that would well up within them and give them the ability to face these odds, where man, apart from God, could not even think about it. Here is the key:

3- To be courageous, you must be aware that God is the one, not only who will do it, He is responsible for the outcome.

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Not you. What a relief. That's why you can be brave. That is why you can be courageous.

the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

(Joshua 1:9b NASB)

No wonder you can be strong. The battle isn't yours, it is His.

4- To be courageous is not only to realize that God is responsible for the outcome, it is by an act of your will to choose consciously, to draw upon His nature which is resident within you and trust Him with the outcome. You can't do it, but He can. So you make a choice, a deliberate choice of the will. You surrender your will. You crawl up into God and you say, "Lord, listen. I can't face this deal. Apart from You, I'm dead. But guess what? The battle is not mine, it's Yours! Have at it!" That's courage.

Biblical courage, then, is "a supernatural confidence in the sovereignty of God in the face of danger or difficulty." So much for the definition, let's turn now to our Living Legend of the moment, this man named David. We will begin where we left off in the last lesson. This is an interesting story, familiar to many of you. Let's review it together beginning with I Samuel 17:1,

COURAGE DEMANDED

Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle; and they were gathered at Socoh which belongs to Judah, and they camped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephesdammin.

And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered, and camped in the valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array to encounter the Philistines.

And the Philistines stood on the mountain on one side while Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with the valley between them.

Then a [hero] champion came out from the armies of the Philistines named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.

And he had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was clothed with scale armor which weighed 5,000 shekels of bronze.

He also had bronze greaves on his legs and a bronze javelin

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slung between his shoulders.

And the shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the head of his spear weighed six hundred shekels of iron; his shield-carrier also walked before him.

And he stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, and said to them, "Why do you come out to draw up in battle array? Am I not the Philistine and YOU servants of Saul? [Looks to me like we've got problems. We're not friends.] Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me.

If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will become your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall become our servants and serve us."

Again the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together."

(I Samuel 17:1-10 NASB)

Can you imagine what Hollywood could do with this today? I don't want to think about it. It is definitely a time for courage, isn't it? By anyone's assessment, it's High Noon! Everything is on the line. Try to picture the scenario in your mind, so you can fully appreciate the David's decision.

The scene is the valley of Elah. It is a valley running east and west from the Mediterranean to just a few miles south of Jerusalem. On one side, camped on a mountain facing the valley, were the Philistines. On the other side, camped on a mountain facing the Philistines, were the Israelites. In the valley between, there paced a huge hulk of a man named Goliath. By some estimates at least, he was 13 feet, 4 inches tall. That's a little taller than I am. You take a man 6 feet, 7 inches, double him, and that's how big this man was. If he lived today, he would skip military service and go right to \$3,000,000 in the NFL draft. We don't know for sure how much he weighed, but his armor weighed some 318 pounds! So he was a first-round draft pick for sure.

And speaking of armor, this monster man not only was huge, he was covered head to toe with the best the world had to offer. The Philistine helmet, as represented on ancient monuments, was unique in form. From the headband, there arose curved lines, by which the outline of the helmet was followed on the sides and rounded on top. Goliath's helmet was made of brass, no less. It must have presented an awesome sight and given

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him a headache too.

On his body, he wore a “coat of mail”. That is an armor covering of metal scales, in his case, brass, rounded at the bottom, squared at the top, and sewed one at a time onto either linen or felt. According to verse 5, it weighed 200 pounds. Are you getting the picture? I’m tired thinking about what this guy was carrying around. His legs were protected by “greaves”, coverings that protected the front part of the legs, usually with either leather or wood, but in Goliath’s case, these coverings were also of bronze. Between his shoulders was a huge brass javelin, with a 25-pound iron spear head attached, and he was protected by a shield that covered his whole body. The shield was carried by a servant, or shield bearer.

In other words, the children of Israel were looking out across that valley at what appeared to be a living brass monument, the biggest moving target they had ever seen. His one goal was to reduce the conflict between the Philistines and the Jews to a one-on-one confrontation between Mr. Heavy Hero and any single Israeli soldier. And since he, for some reason, was elected to define the terms of the battle, he made it very simple. He said, “You find any one guy who can kill me, and we’ll be your slaves forever. But, on the other hand, if the guy you choose to go head to head with me loses, you people become our slaves. Okay? Got it?” He made this declaration of war by daring the Jews, “Just send me a man.” He hadn’t had a good fight in days. He wanted a chance to retain the ultra, ultra heavyweight title of the valley. So the whole army of Israel, in essence, was paralyzed with fear until they found one hero who would dare to defy this mountain of brass in the valley.

COURAGE DENIED

In verse 11, we see how the Israeli army responded to our friend and this call for courage.

When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

(1 Samuel 17:11 NASB)

Should you recall our definition, you would immediately remember that their response was the absence of courage. They were discouraged. They were dismayed. They were afraid. They were “skeered,” loose translation. That’s what the original text

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says, “skeered.” They searched within themselves for an inner quality to equip them, but they didn’t have it.

COURAGE DEMONSTRATED

Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse, and he had eight sons. And Jesse was old in the days of Saul, advanced in years among men. [He was about my age.]

And the three older sons of Jesse had gone after Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle were El-i’-ab, the first-born, and the second to him, Abin’-adab, and the third, Shammah.

And David was the youngest. (I Samuel 17:12-14a NASB)

So the Scriptures remind us of David’s history. He was the youngest of eight boys, and apparently his three oldest brothers, had been tapped by the Israeli Selective Service System to go to war. Verse 15 tell us that David during this time was going back and forth between his father’s house and his father’s sheep. Verse 16 tells us how long this call for courage had been going on, if you can believe this,

The Philistine came forward morning and evening for forty days and took his stand. (I Samuel 17:16 NASB)

Forty days, mind you, this incredible hulk taunts the entire army of Israel. Twice a day, he comes out of his cage (or whatever they kept him in) and he harassed these embarrassed Jews.

Now at last David gets an assignment. Granted, it’s not a major one, but David was being shipped to the front lines. His job was to take a bushel and three pints of parched wheat, ten loaves of bread from the ever-lovin’ ovens of Jesse’s bakery, and ten different cuts of cheese for his elder bothers and their commanding officers. In other words, this king-to-be was assigned the less than glamorous task of delivering groceries to the troops. So David’s mission was to take the cherished cheddar and the longed-for loaves to the hungry horde at the edge of the valley where the harried Hebrews were being mocked by the jolly brass giant. Verse 20,

So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the circle of the camp while the army was going out in battle array shouting the

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war cry.

Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army
against army. (I Samuel 17:20,21 NASB)

Now we don't know how, but God intervened and in all this
confusion, David finds his older brothers. Verse 23 says,

As he was talking with them, behold, the champion the
Philistine from Gath named Goliath, was coming up from
the army of the Philistines and he spoke these same words
and David heard them. (I Samuel 17:23 NASB)

So Dave got a first-hand demonstration of the big man's
ranting and raving, and he heard as well the soldiers saying,
"I'm scared! I'm scared! What are we going to do?"

David's Misunderstanding

David was intrigued. Here was this over-sized bag of brass
taunting and teasing the whole Israeli army. So David proceeds
to play the role of Ted Koppel, a leading news broadcaster. He
gets his microphone out and he interviews his brothers. His
brothers, however, didn't find it amusing.

Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the
men; and Eliab's anger burned against David and he said,
"Why have you come down? And with whom have you left
those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence
and the wickedness in your heart; for you have come down
in order to see the battle." (I Samuel 17:28 NASB)

Jumpin' Jehoshophat! Shades of Joseph! Another bunch of
jealous brothers. Not only does big brother make disparaging
remarks about the importance of baby brother's professional
responsibilities "who'd you leave those FEW sheep with?" He
just plain questions the kid's motives and accuses him of just
pretending to be a grocery boy in order to come down for a front
row seat for the mis-match of the century. Can't you hear his
voice whine just a little bit?

But David said, "What have I done now? Was it not just a
question?" (I Samuel 17:29 NASB)

"Golly gee," David moaned, "can't I even ask a question?"
But if you look at verse 26, you'll see why his brother was so
irritated. David asked this question,

"...For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should

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taunt the armies of the Living God?"

(I Samuel 17:26 NASB)

To my knowledge, this is the first time in this story that God had been mentioned. This ruddy looking kid, probably no more than 19 years old, is asking these seasoned warriors who this overgrown brass bucket thinks he is to challenge the name of their God. And his comments didn't go unheard either.

When the words which David spoke were heard, they told them to Saul, and he sent for him.

(I Samuel 17:31 NASB)

Now Saul, Beloved, was a desperate coward. So he brings this kid whose sole purpose was to hand deliver the Limburger and rye, and he is standing eyeball to eyeball with King Saul. And David wasn't afraid of King Saul either.

And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

(I Samuel 17:32 NASB)

You are going to see what a coward Saul is in just a minute.

Then Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth."

(I Samuel 17:33 NASB)

"I'm not sure about this, you're just a kid. He's been a soldier since his youth. This isn't apples against apples," King Saul said, "this guy's not only a big bozo, all he's ever done is kill people. What qualifies you?"

David's Memory!

Beloved, David's answer is choice. Listen to his memory. And this is the key in your life and in mine. David remembered who his God was. He remembered what his God had done. The little things in life that God has for you in the past, write them down on your heart so that when there is a need for courage, the Spirit of God can draw them back to your remembrance.

But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock,

I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him.

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Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God.”

And David said, [Here is the key,] “The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” And Saul said to David, “Go and may the LORD be with you.”

(I Samuel 17:34-37 NASB)

The reason we know Saul was a coward, among other things, was because he wasn't just tossing out a little kid to take this arrogant giant's attention off what was going on. Remember the terms of the battle? “If you send someone to fight me,” Goliath said, “and I kill them, you all will become my slaves.” So this was the main event folks. There was not going to be another show after this one. But there is something about this young man, something that none of the other Israeli soldiers possessed. It was that quality called courage. Well, then why did Saul agree to let a young, untrained warrior take on this brass-plated freight train with so much at stake? This young shepherd had no combat experience, but he had an incredible memory. He remembered that his God had handled a few similar, though less visible crises before, with no problem. God had been at work in the marketplace of his own life, so now when confronted with a scenario that seemingly looked impossible, those miracles came back to remind him who his God was.

It seems one day Leo the Lion had gotten hungry. David was tending the sheep and Leo was looking for a sheep sandwich that day. But about the time the ferocious feline began to sink his teeth into supper, God filled David with an incredible quality called courage. The result was a startled lion, a saved sheep, and a shepherd who gave the glory to God. Just a short time later apparently, Bobby the Bear attempted to add David's flock to his menu, and the same thing happened. What developed was one little shepherd boy who discovered who his God was.

The result was an incredible quality called courage. David looked at this uncircumcised Philistine as the enemy of God. Therefore, it only stood to reason that God was not going to let him taunt and ridicule Israel's finest. It was only a matter of finding a man who was willing to crawl up into God and watch him work. So David turns to Saul and says, “Guess what? I'm your man!”

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David's Missile

Then Saul made another one of his big mistakes.

Then Saul clothed David with his garments and put a bronze helmet on his head, and he clothed him with armor.

David girded his sword over his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. So David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." And David took them off. (I Samuel 17:38,39 NASB)

You see Beloved, the best the world has to offer just gets in the way when you're doing battle with the enemies of God. So often God chooses to use His slow and awkward, unlikely, unbelievable ways to confound the wise. Had David gone out to battle Goliath clothed in Saul's armor, who would have gotten the glory? David. God is not in the business of sharing His glory. So David said to Saul, "Thanks, but no thanks, I'll leave this stuff here." He put it back in the locker. But David wasn't going to go empty-handed.

He took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his pouch, and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine.

(I Samuel 17:40 NASB)

Now I don't know about you, but you won't find this on page 445 of the Israeli war manual under "Acceptable Weaponry for Battle". But God uses the simple things of this life to confound the wise. So hold on to your hats. The world's first guided missile is about to be launched from the valley of Elah.

Close your eyes and imagine the picture now. Down in the valley stands this brass-clad superman, 13 feet tall, so laden down with armor, he looked like an Edsel that had been bronzed. Coming at him was a young Hebrew boy less than 20 years old, who had never spent a day in the military. The Big Boy had a spear that would slice a mountain in two, and arms that looked like he'd just won the Olympics in the shot put competition. On the other hand was this little shepherd boy with no armor on, and in his hand was but a slingshot, and five smooth stones he had picked up out of the brook.

On either side of the valley, now hushed in anticipation, were the two opposing armies whose entire future hung in the

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balance watched what would happen. Their lives from this point on would either be miserable or victorious, depending on the outcome of this one-to-one confrontation. Listen now to the conversation,

The Philistine was angry and said to David, “Am I a dog, [that was pretty accurate, but he asked the question anyway] that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods [that was a mistake].

The Philistine also said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field.”
(I Samuel 17:43,44 NASB)

In other words, the Philistine version of Harry the Hippo was offended that all the best Israeli’s could send to him was this young boy with a stick and five rocks. So he cursed David, and swore by his gods to take this young lad and feed him to the vultures for breakfast. But David responded with these incredibly memorable words, words that could only be uttered by a man of courage. I would encourage you to memorize this verse and lay it in your heart and keep it with you.

Then David said to the Philistine, [and you can say this to the enemy] “You come to me with sword, a spear, and a javelin, [the best the world has to offer] but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted.

This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,

And that all this assembly [these cowards who call themselves Jews] may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD’s and He will give you into our hands.”
(I Samuel 17:45-47 NASB)

There is the source of David’s courage. He understood, Beloved, the battle belonged to God. David had two choices. He could look at Goliath, as all his fellow Israelis had done, and cringe in fear. Or, he could just look at His God, the God who ripped a bear apart and grabbed a lion by his beard and flipped it on his side, and reckon that this loud-mouthed brass-plated Mack truck was just one more fool who dared to reckon with his

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God. And that's what he did.

David contrasted the world with the Word, and he said, "You come to me with the best equipment the world has yet developed. I'm coming to you clothed in the authority of the name of God. Goliath, you've missed it. If this were a physical battle, you'd win hands down. You're twice my size and three times my heavy. You've got enough artillery to whip me with your eyes closed. But Goliath you've missed it! You are daring to taunt the people who bear the name of God. That makes it a spiritual battle. And Goliath, you're not equipped to fight a spiritual battle. You've got the wrong spirit." If we could only come to grips with the reality of that.

David went on, "It's true. The vultures are going to have a feast today, but it's going to be barbecued giant. And I'll tell you why. There are two reasons,"

1- That all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. His testimony to the world is at stake. This is Super Bowl Seventy with the undefeated, unscored-on Giants are playing the Winless Wonders who've never scored a point. This is an upset the world will never forget.

2- And secondly Goliath, this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD's." God has got to teach these stone-headed kids of His another lesson that His ways are higher than man's ways.

Then it happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, then David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.

And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone [clunk, that's in the original text] and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground.

Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and he struck the Philistine and killed him; but there was no sword in David's hand.

(I Samuel 17:48-50 NASB)

Then, of course, David took his sword, and killed the giant, and cut off his head, and the next verse adds:

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they [ran like crazy] fled. (I Samuel 17:51b NASB)

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COURAGE DEVELOPED

That quality called courage! Thousands upon thousands of Israeli soldiers cringed in fear for forty days before this oversized cannonball. None of them would go near him. Then along came one solitary young man. A man after God's own heart. He had no experience in combat, no weapons, no armor. He was no hero. Even his own brothers accused him of coming along just to see the slaughter. But he had something none of the others had. He had that mysterious, transforming quality called courage! He had an inner boldness and confidence in the face of danger that the God he served could do anything! Do you?

He also had that quiet assurance that the battle was not his to fight it anyway, it was God's. So armed with nothing but courage, he refused the world's covering of armor, and the world's kinds of ammunition, and humbly picked up a rock, the symbol of the God he served, and without a trace of fear, he stood before the challenge, "in the name of his God."

One stone thrown, and the battle was over. But Beloved, the battle was over long before David picked up that stone. The battle was over when one young king-to-be believed God enough to draw from within his heart that quality called courage and stand up in front of the enemy without apology in the name of his God. The battle belonged to God. It was won the minute somebody finally had enough courage to believe it.

You say, "I'd like to be a man or a woman like that. I'd like to be characterized by that quality called courage. I'd like to be able to face the unknowns of life, the challenges of life, the impossible situations of life the way David did. How do I become a man or a woman of courage?"

Courage Developed

We are going to go back to Joshua 1, the courage chapter in the Bible. There is a "courage" sandwich in that chapter. I call it a sandwich because there is a command on each end and inside the substance that makes it happen. In verse 7 remember, God says,

Only be strong and very courageous [that is an order]; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go.

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You just stick to the Word Beloved, it will never let you down. Here is how you to stick to the Word you, you get the Word to stick to you.

This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night [without stopping], so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and very courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

(Joshua 1:7-9 NASB)

God is saying, “You don’t have to be afraid of anything.” God is not ever going to leave you. God is not going to ever leave you alone. You say, “How do I know that?” Beloved, because you have saturated your life with His Word. Look at Jesus as he faced Satan in Matthew 4. His heart was bathed in His Father’s Word, and He abounded with that quality called courage. Jesus looked Satan straight in the eye and said, “It is written!” And so can you.

Your Goliath may not be as evident as David’s was. You may be facing an impending crisis that appears to be irrevocable. You have a physical problem that appears to be incurable. You may have a personal problem that appears to be insoluble. Your crisis may come this week in the form of a trauma, or a phone call, or letter, or a visit to a doctor’s office. It may come in the form of endless days of waiting, or endless years of praying. But no matter how it comes, you will either be faced with immediate danger or circumstances you can’t control. You have two choices:

1- You can look at the circumstances, those thirteen-foot giants that appear in your life, and you can cringe and cry.

2- Or you can choose, Beloved, by an act of your will to lift up your eyes and behold your God.

You can meditate day and night on this book of the Law. Let it not depart from your mouth. Bathe yourself in its promises and experience a fountain of confidence rising up against you so that the crisis will not be the issue. You are coming against that crisis in the “name of the Lord your God”, and at once something bursts anew in your heart, “The battle is not mine;

That Quality Called Courage

it's God's!" Your heart will be filled with courage. The tension will begin to dissolve in an ocean of peace. The fear will dissolve in a sea of hope. The crying eyes will be dried by a towel called joy.

And suddenly, though the giant is still there, you will have been miraculously transformed into another Kingdom, a kingdom characterized by a wonderful attribute known as "that Quality called Courage".

Like David himself as he wrote Psalm 37, you'll declare with confidence,

But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: He is their strength in the time of trouble.

And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in Him. (Psalm 37:39,40 NKJV)

THAT QUALITY CALLED COURAGE

Oh, that quality called courage
What a difference it can make
It will rise up deep within you
And the devil's power will break.

When the enemy's before you,
And he's taunting you with fear
That quality called courage
Will remind you God is near.

And with quiet reassurance
His Word will let you know
That His presence will be with you
No matter where you go.

Oh, that quality called courage
It cannot be denied.
When the giants of life assail you,
And defeat is but implied.

Turn your eyes and look at Jesus
Not on what or who's around,
And with that quality called courage
Watch those giants go tumbling down!

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