

WHEN LIFE HITS

THE  TO WIN
WHAT YOU'RE FACING.

“When Life Hits” Leader Guide

Thank you for leading a Connect Group at the Chapel! You’re creating a space where people can build relationships, grow in their faith in God, and move their story forward. This guide is here to help you lead your Group with clarity and confidence.

This study is built around a message series called “When Life Hits: The Keys to Win What You’re Facing.” It centers on the story of David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17) and pulls out practical principles for facing the “giants” we all encounter—marriage strain, financial pressure, a scary diagnosis, or even a habit we just can’t seem to quit. David’s story shows us what it looks like to face those moments anchored in trust in God.

Over the coming weeks, people in your Group will show up facing obstacles that feel impossible—like the odds are stacked against them and there’s no clear path through. What happens in your conversations can help them see it differently, and move forward instead of backing down.

At the end of each week’s guide, you’ll find a section called “Sling Another Stone.”

These optional questions are designed to help you press in and keep the conversation going.

This is how we fight together—following God’s direction no matter what giant stands in the way.

Week 1



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Start by having someone in your group read from 1 Samuel 17 NIV:

‘But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine.” Saul said to David, “Go, and the Lord be with you.”’

Pray that through our time together, God would help us see clearly what we’re up against and how He wants us to respond. Thank Him that He sees us, cares about what we’re going through, and doesn’t leave us to face it alone. Ask Him to speak to us through His Word, guide our conversation, and help us trust Him with whatever is standing in front of us. Amen!

Say this: We’re kicking off a discussion called “When Life Hits”. It’s all about giants!

We all know about giants—the obstacles and situations that stand in the way, threatening us and those we love. Giants mess with what we believe about ourselves — even what we believe about God. It's the thing we're facing that's not backing down, not shrinking back, not going away.

Over the next few weeks, we're going to look at our giants through the lens of the story of David and Goliath. We'll slow it down and pull out what actually led to David winning—what he did, and what he refused to do.

Most of us are looking for a way around the giant, but David understood that God created us to go through the giant. And it starts with understanding what giants are actually doing for us. But before we dig into the conversation, let's get into the story.



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If that doesn't fire you up to fight a giant, nothing will! That was David's giant story...now let's talk about ours. Take a second and think about it—what's a moment in your life where you faced something that felt enormous — a situation that got in the way, and applied so much pressure that you weren't sure you'd make it through?

- ◆ What's a “giant” you've faced? Give us the quick 2-minute version.
- ◆ Did you take it down, or did it take you down?
- ◆ Looking back, what did you learn?

One of the first things giants do is reveal us—they introduce us to ourselves. When life hits, it has a way of exposing what's already in us...or what's missing.

When David steps up to face Goliath, it's not the first time he's been in a fight. We read the passage where David tells Saul about the lion and the bear—those were the moments from his past where something was built in him. Long before the giant showed up, God was already developing his foundation. So when Goliath challenged him, David didn't suddenly become someone new...it revealed who he already was.

(**Leader tip:** Before you ask the questions, this is a great place to go first. Share a vulnerable personal story of a time pressure revealed something in you—something you were proud of, or something that needed to grow. Set the tone with honesty.)

- ◆ Think about a time you were under pressure—what did it reveal about you?
- ◆ Did you like what you saw, or did it expose something that needed to grow spiritually?

- ◆ Where might God be preparing you for your next “giant”?

Before David ever stood in front of Goliath, he had already been through some things. The lion. The bear. Those moments didn't look like much at the time—but that's where his trust in God was built.

A lot of us want to be ready when the big moment comes, but the truth is, many of us are preparing for the giant – in front of the giant. Preparation doesn't happen in the spotlight. It happens in quiet places without an audience. When the big giant shows up, we're going to want the faith that was formed through the lion and the bear.

What gets developed in private has a way of revealing itself in the fight.

- ◆ Looking back, where have you seen a smaller, earlier moment prepare you for something bigger later on?
- ◆ What might God be building in you right now that doesn't feel significant—but could matter more than you think?

The second thing giants do is **refine us**.

When we face them, some things get shaped in us. First, our faith gets stronger—because you don't build real trust in God without going through (not around – through) situations where you

have to rely on Him.

Giants also refine us by clarifying our identity. David was seen by everyone else as “only a young man”. There was no logical reason to believe that David would be able to defeat the giant. Facing giants forces some questions:

- ◆ Am I what people say?
- ◆ Am I what I feel like I am?
- ◆ -OR- Am I who God says I am?

And lastly, giants refine us by growing our dependence on God. When life hits, it gets really clear what we’re leaning on—our ability, other people, or God. David didn’t lean on his size, his experience, or Saul’s armor. He leaned on God, and that’s what led him to victory.

- ◆ When you’re under pressure, what do you tend to lean on first?
- ◆ What’s going on in your life right now that God is using to refine you?

Is it strengthening your faith, clarifying your identity, or growing your dependence on God?

Giants have a way of exposing how much of our life is resting on us—our ability, our control, our plan. And eventually, we all face something that reminds us our strength has limits. David faced Goliath with confidence, but it wasn’t confidence in himself—it came from trusting that God would be with him and give him what he

needed for the fight. Maybe the next step for some of us is moving from self-reliance to deeper dependence on God in what we're facing right now.

(You can **close in prayer** here – or **keep the conversation going!**)

SLING ANOTHER STONE

Read 1 Samuel 17:25 aloud:

‘Now the Israelites had been saying, “Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel.”’

Saul promised a reward to whoever would take down the giant—great wealth, a family connection to the king, and freedom from taxes. In other words: there was something valuable waiting on the other side of the fight.

Most of us focus on how intimidating the giant is, but David saw something different. He understood that the giant wasn't just standing against him...it was standing between him and what God had for him.

- ◆ Have you ever looked back and realized something good came on the other side of a hard season?

- ◆ What would you have missed if you had avoided that challenge?

Why do you think we tend to focus more on the giant than what could be beyond it?

- ◆ A lot of the blessing God wants to bring into our lives is found on the other side of courage, obedience, and perseverance.
- ◆ Is there an area of your life right now where fear or discouragement is tempting you to back away?

What does it practically look like to keep moving toward what God has for you, even when the giant is still standing there?

PRAYER POINT

This week, pray that God will help you stop focusing only on the size of the giant and start seeing what He may want to do through it. Ask Him to grow your trust, give you courage, and help you take the next right step instead of backing away from what's in front of you.

NEXT STEPS

Try something new:

- ◆ If you feel yourself backing away from a difficult situation, take a step toward it instead.
- ◆ If you know someone else facing a giant, go out of your way to encourage them that the blessing is on the other side.
- ◆ Join the Go Team, and begin serving somewhere consistently.

Week 2



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Start by reading aloud about three voices that David heard in 1 Samuel 17:

‘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? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.”’

Saul replied, “You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth.”

He (Goliath) said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. “Come here,” he said, “and I’ll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!”’

Pray for strength to follow God when life gets loud and confusing. Ask Him for wisdom and discernment about the voices we allow to influence us, and thank Him that His voice still speaks loud and clear. Amen!

Say this: Over the last couple of weeks, we've been talking about giants—the pressure, obstacles, fears, and situations that stand in our way. We've seen how giants reveal what's in us and how God can use big challenges to strengthen and refine us.

But before David ever fought Goliath, he had to deal with something else first: Voices. The voices around us are part of every battle we face. Some need to be heard and valued, but others need to be silenced, and that's our goal for today.

- ◆ Looking back, whose voice has had the biggest influence on your life?
- ◆ Have you ever let someone else's opinion, criticism, or doubt affect the way you see yourself?
- ◆ What kind of voices tend to get the loudest in your head when you're under pressure or facing something difficult?

Today we're identifying three voices we need to silence. The first one is **Eliab's voice**. Eliab attacked David's heart and motive. Eliab is David's older brother. And honestly, some of the deepest wounds come from the people closest to us. Eliab likely expected to be the one Samuel would anoint as the next king, but God chose David instead. There was history there. Tension. Insecurity.

David could've stood there arguing and trying to defend himself, but 1 Samuel

17:30 says he simply turned away. Not every voice deserves a response. Some voices just need distance. You don't have to justify yourself to every critical voice around you. Stay clear of the voices who don't see you the way God sees you.

- ◆ Have you ever been hurt by someone close to you misunderstanding your heart or motives?
- ◆ Why is it so tempting to defend and justify ourselves when we feel misunderstood?

The second voice David had to silence was **Saul's voice**. Saul wasn't attacking David like Eliab did, but he was still trying to shape him. Wear this. Fight like this. Approach the giant the way I would. The Saul voice will always want you to do things the way they did it.

But David understood something important: He couldn't fight someone else's battle dressed as someone he wasn't. So instead of Saul's armor, David took his staff, chose five stones, put them in the pouch of his bag, and took his sling in his hand. The Saul voice boxes God in. It assumes God only works one way, through one personality, one background, one style, one story. But you can't conquer giants dressed as someone you're not.

- ◆ Have you ever felt pressure to become someone you're not in order to succeed, fit in, or be accepted?

- ◆ What's the difference between learning from others and losing yourself trying to be like them?

The third voice David had to silence was **Goliath's voice**. Goliath constantly magnified what David lacked. You're too small. Too young. Too inexperienced. Not enough. Goliath challenged, "Choose a man!" God responded by sending a boy. The enemy will always try to convince you it takes more to defeat him than it really does.

Goliath came with a sword, spear and javelin – all powered by human strength. David responded from a completely different perspective: "I come to you in the name of the Lord." David didn't ignore the facts — he replaced them with God's truth. We silence Goliath's voice by replacing it, not ignoring it.

- ◆ What kind of things does the "Goliath voice" tend to whisper to you when you're under pressure?
- ◆ Have you ever been talked out of something because someone called you unqualified, unprepared, or not enough?

Every one of these voices was trying to pull David away from God's assignment. Eliab attacked his heart. Saul tried to reshape his identity. Goliath magnified his limitations. But David kept moving forward because he silenced those voices. The same is true for us. The voices we

allow will shape the outcome of our fight. (You can **close in prayer** here – or **keep the conversation going!**)

SLING ANOTHER STONE

Read aloud: John 10:3-5 NLT:

“The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice. They won’t follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don’t know his voice.”

One of the reasons that unhealthy voices influence us is because they seem familiar. Fear gets familiar. Shame gets familiar. Criticism gets familiar. Over time, we get so used to those voices that we start believing what they say.

But Jesus said His people should know His voice so clearly that the stranger’s voice starts sticking out to us. The goal isn’t just learning what voices to silence — it’s learning God’s voice well enough to tell when you’re hearing the voice of a stranger.

- ◆ How have you learned to tell the difference between God’s voice, and someone else’s?
- ◆ What are some unhealthy voices that have become so familiar that we have stopped questioning them?

- ◆ What does it look like in your life to prioritize hearing God's voice daily?

PRAYER POINT

This week, pray for God to show you the strange voices that have been shaping your thoughts, fears, and decisions. Ask God to help you silence the voices pulling you away from Him, and thank Him that His voice still leads, corrects, and speaks loud and clear. Amen!

NEXT STEPS

- ◆ Unfollow, mute, or cut off a voice that regularly fills your life with fear and discouragement. (social media channels, friendships, co-workers, etc.)
- ◆ Identify one thought that needs to be silenced in your life, and memorize a Scripture to oppose it. Every time that thought comes up, respond with the Scripture – more than once if necessary.
- ◆ Complete Growth Track, and discover more about the unique gifts and wiring God placed in your life.

Week 3



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Start by having someone in your group read 1 Samuel 17:8-11 aloud:

‘Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, “Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us.” Then the Philistine said, “This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other.” On hearing the Philistine’s words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.’

Pray that God would help us recognize the kind of thinking that leaves us discouraged and stuck. Ask Him to grow our trust, quiet our anxiety, and help us move forward with confidence instead of shrinking back from the giants in front of us. Amen!

Say this: We’ve been talking about the giants we face in life — the pressure, fear, obstacles, and situations that try to stand in our way. We’ve seen how giants reveal what’s in us, how God can use them to

refine us, and how they expose the voices we need to silence.

This week, we're shifting the focus to the Israelite army. Same giant. Same battlefield. Same God. But while David moved forward, Saul and the army stayed frozen in fear. Today we're looking at four mindsets that kept them stuck — really they are the same mindsets that still keep people stuck today.

The Scripture we read says that Saul and the Israelite army were “dismayed and terrified.”

- ◆ When was a time in your life you felt like that?
- ◆ What kinds of situations tend to trigger fear, anxiety, or discouragement in you the fastest?

The first mindset that crippled the Israelite army was **fear**. For 40 days, every morning and evening, Goliath came out mocking God and God's people. Day after day, fear slowly took over their perspective. The Bible never says the giant grew bigger, but every time the army saw him, they fled in great fear. The giant didn't get bigger — their view of God got smaller. That's what fear does. Fear exaggerates. It distorts reality. It minimizes who you are and magnifies the obstacle in front of you. But David made a decision: I will not take their fear into my fight.

- ◆ Can you think of a time when fear distorted the way you were seeing a situation?
- ◆ Where are you currently carrying someone else's fear, anxiety, or negativity into your own situation?

The second mindset we have to look out for is **inaction**. That's what fear does when it sits too long. The internal mindset of fear causes a lack of movement on the outside. Nobody stepped forward. Nobody confronted the problem. Fear kept them stuck in place.

The problem is that if you don't move against the giant, you slowly start to surrender to it. The army just stood there and watched Goliath day after day. David responded completely differently. He didn't stand and watch — he ran toward the giant.

- ◆ Have you ever known what needed to happen, but fear kept you from taking action?
- ◆ What's one area of your life where you know God may be calling you to stop avoiding and start moving forward?

The third mindset was **silence**. One of the interesting things about this story is not just what's in the Scripture, but what's missing. When the giant mocked God and intimidated the army, there's no prayer from Saul. No declaration of God's power. No reminder of God's

faithfulness. Nobody confronted the giant's lies with God's truth — except David. Before the battle ever started, David spoke confidently about what God was going to do. The weapon is the Word. Our silence today builds the giants we face tomorrow.

- ◆ Where have you been silent when you know you should speak up?
- ◆ Why are we loud about our opinions in social media, but silent about the situations that are closest to us?

The final mindset that paralyzed Saul and his army was **tolerance**. Eventually the army stopped seeing the giant as something that needed to be defeated, and started seeing him as something they had to live with. It's not that bad. It's just talk. As long as he stays over there, we can stand here and nobody gets hurt.

What once shocked you slowly becomes normal. A habit. A mindset. A relationship pattern. An addiction. An attitude.

Eventually we stop confronting the giant and start building our lives around it.

We'll never conquer what we become comfortable with.

- ◆ Have you ever gotten so used to a problem that you stopped fighting it?
- ◆ What have you accepted as normal even though it is still hurting you?

David had a different mindset than Saul and the army. David refused to take on their fear. While the army stood still,

David moved forward. While everyone else stayed silent, David spoke confidently about the power and faithfulness of God. And while the army adjusted their lives around the giant, David walked right up to the giant and killed it. The same God who gave David the strength to conquer his giant is available to us as well — but we can't keep thinking like people who do nothing.

(You can **close in prayer here** – or **keep the conversation going!**)

SLING ANOTHER STONE

Read John 10:9-10 NLT aloud:

'Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures. The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.'

Jesus describes the life He came to give with words like saved, free, good, rich, and satisfying. Before we rush past that, let's slow down and really think about that picture.

- ◆ When you hear Jesus describe a “rich and satisfying life,” what do you think He means?
- ◆ How do unaddressed giants impact our ability to live the kind of life that Jesus described?

Most people don't wake up one day and decide to settle for less. Usually it happens slowly. You adjust. You cope. You stop expecting things to change.

What obstacle in your life is starting to feel like “business as usual”?

Which mindset from today — fear, inaction, silence, or tolerance — will you choose to change, and get back in the fight? Why?

PRAYER POINT

This week, pray for the courage to confront the giants that have slowly become normal in your life. Ask God to strengthen your faith, renew your mindset, and help you keep fighting for the full life He created you to live. Amen!

NEXT STEPS

Find a Scripture you can boldly speak out loud in a situation where fear normally keeps you silent.

Pick a fight. If there's a giant you've learned to tolerate, decide this week to confront it instead of living around it.

Make a move. Sign up for a Serve Project. Pray the [Giant Slayer's Prayer](#). (Share this link with your Group so they can use it throughout the week.)

Week 4



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Start by having someone in your group read Ruth 1:1-5 aloud:

‘In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. The man’s name was Elimelek, his wife’s name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there. Now Elimelek, Naomi’s husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.’

Pray for open hearts as we look at the story of Naomi and Ruth. Ask God to strengthen our faith in seasons of loss, disappointment, and uncertainty, and thank Him that He is still working even when we cannot yet see the full picture. Amen!

Say this: Throughout this series, we’ve been talking about giants – the obstacles we face in life. Sometimes the obstacle is

clear. There's a giant standing in front of you, and you know that victory is on the other side. There's hope for something better if you can just make it through the fight.

But sometimes the obstacle is on the inside. The giant is the discouragement, pain, bitterness from something you already lost. It's a loss that you can't undo. This week, we're stepping away from David and Goliath for a moment, and looking at the story of Naomi and Ruth, and what it looks like to overcome obstacles when life has already taken something from you.

- ◆ Have you ever gone through something where the biggest obstacle wasn't the situation itself, but what it was doing inside of you?
- ◆ When you experience deep loss or disappointment, what's your natural tendency — shut down, isolate, get angry, stay busy, something else?

In this Bible story, Naomi is just trying to hold her family together — meanwhile everything keeps falling apart. There's a famine in the land. No crops. No food. No clear answer for how she would feed her family. They hear there's food in Moab, so they leave home and step into uncertainty hoping things will get better. But then Naomi's husband dies. There's a brief moment of celebration when both of her sons find wives, but then both sons

die too. Now they are three women, living alone. Grieving one loss after another. The obstacles are stacking up, and Naomi just can't seem to buy a win.

- ◆ When was the last time the obstacles stacked up, and you felt like Naomi – like you just needed a win?
- ◆ Have you ever experienced emotional exhaustion? What did it feel like to you?

In the next part of the story, Naomi hears that the Lord has caused the famine back home to ease up, so she decides to return. All three women leave together, but before they've traveled far, Naomi instructs her daughters-in-law to go back to their families and start over.

You can feel Naomi sinking deeper into discouragement and hopelessness. “What do I have left to offer you?” Naomi is convinced her story has collapsed beyond repair. Orpah eventually turns back, but Ruth stays on the journey. And when they arrive back in Bethlehem, Naomi tells the people, “Don't call me Naomi anymore. Call me Mara.” The name Naomi means “pleasant”. The name Mara means “bitter”.

Bitterness can begin to change the way we see ourselves and our lives.

- ◆ What does it look like when bitterness starts becoming someone's identity?

- ◆ How have you kept your pain from hardening into bitterness over time?
- ◆ Are you carrying any unresolved pain that you are concerned could eventually harden into bitterness?

(We just asked a very vulnerable question. You might need to pause here and allow some time to pray over individuals who need healing from past hurt.)

The story turns when Ruth, the daughter-in-law who stayed with Naomi, marries a respected man in Bethlehem named Boaz. For the first time in a long time, there's hope. Stability. Provision. And Boaz doesn't just care for Ruth — he brings Naomi in as family too.

Eventually Ruth and Boaz have a son, and Naomi cares for the baby like he's her own. They named him Obed. Obed became the father of Jesse, and Jesse became the father of David. And 28 generations later — the son of God, Jesus would be born through the line of David, and save the world. Never forget — God is in the restoration business.

- ◆ What's one area of your life that you need faith to believe that God can restore?
- ◆ What would it mean to you to have someone stay beside you through a painful season the way Ruth stayed with Naomi?

Just three generations removed from unspeakable grief, David would stand in a valley facing a giant after being anointed king of Israel. What once looked like nothing but loss and bitterness became part of a story God was still redeeming. Never end your story in Chapter 1. God often does his best work after a bitter season.

(You can **close in prayer** here – or **keep the conversation going!**)

SLING ANOTHER STONE

Read aloud: Ruth 1:19-22

‘So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, “Can this be Naomi?”’

“Don’t call me Naomi,” she told them. “Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.”

So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.’

Naomi says, “I went away full, but I returned empty.” But if we look closely at the story, Naomi didn’t actually leave full. She left Bethlehem because there was

a famine. Fear. Pressure. Survival. She left under duress hoping things would get better somewhere else.

And now she returns bitter, convinced that God has abandoned her story.

- ◆ Do you remember a time when your current bitterness caused you to romanticize the way things were before?

There's an interesting detail at the end of Chapter 1: Naomi arrives back in Bethlehem at the beginning of the harvest season. Bethlehem literally means "house of bread." While Naomi is focused on her emptiness, God is already surrounding her with provision she cannot yet see. Bitterness has a way of blinding people to the ways God is providing for them, and leading them to their next chapter.

- ◆ Have you ever had a season where you were so focused on loss that you struggled to see the good things God was still doing around you?
- ◆ What current obstacle is making it hard for you to see God's provision, and be grateful for it?

Naomi's obstacle was not an actual giant standing in a valley. It was a different kind of giant – grief, loss, disappointment, and bitterness that settled into her heart over time. But even in the middle of those obstacles, God was still providing, restoring, and writing a bigger story than

Naomi could see for herself. The same is true for us. Some of the hardest giants we face are the ones on the inside, but God is still able to bring hope, healing, and restoration out of places that once felt broken.

PRAYER POINT

This week, pray that God will help you recognize His provision even in difficult seasons. Remember the line from the Lord's prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." Ask Him to heal any bitterness that may be settling in your heart, and remind you that your story is not finished yet. Amen!

NEXT STEPS

Here are a few things you can share with your Group to help them have some action steps to work on.

Reach out to someone this week who may be walking through grief, disappointment, or emotional exhaustion, and remind them they are not alone.

Intentionally look for the provision of God, and make it a point to express your gratitude to Him.

If you've never been water baptized, sign up for the next one. It's a great reminder that your story is still being written. "It's Not Over!"

Week 5



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Start by having someone read 1 Samuel 17:34-37 aloud:

‘But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine...”’

Pray that God would help us to be ready for the moments when life hits. Ask Him to mature us through consistency, endurance, and faithfulness. Thank Him for the moments before the moments — using hidden seasons to prepare us for what’s ahead. Amen!

Say this: Throughout this series, we’ve been talking about giants — the obstacles and battles that show up when life hits. We’ve been using the story of David and Goliath as a model. Before David ever

stood in front of Goliath, he spent years alone in a field taking care of sheep – protecting them from lions and bears. David learned in the field what he needed in the fight.

- ◆ What have your preparation seasons been like? How have they built your confidence to face what's ahead?
- ◆ What do you feel uniquely prepared to handle because of what you've already been through?

David says, “I’ve been keeping my father’s sheep.” That was his qualifier. Not talent. Not experience, but rather faithfulness. The sheep required consistency. Every day the sheep needed something. There was no spotlight. No applause. Just consistently showing up.

The small things done consistently over time will always take us further than one big leap. That’s what David was doing in that field day after day before he even knew that one day there could be a giant.

- ◆ What are the daily routines that are building your capacity to fight?
- ◆ Sheep also require patience. They grow and learn slowly. What’s taking longer to develop than you thought it would?
- ◆ Tell us about your “sheep”. What is the area of consistent stewardship that you are committed to right now?

What David learned from the sheep was important, but David also learned something from the lion. You hear the lion's roar, long before you see the teeth. Fear and intimidation work the same way. The voice usually comes before the attack.

But David had already heard that roar before, and he had gained the courage to find it.

While everyone else ran from Goliath's threatening voice, David moved toward it because he had already learned not to fear the lion's roar.

- ◆ What is the current fear that feels like that lion's roar – off in the distance – threatening something that hasn't happened yet?
- ◆ Do you typically walk toward the roar, or shrink back and wait on it to come to you?

The lions were loud, but the bears were heavy. Bears overwhelm us with pressure. They come with the weight of responsibility and expectations. Bears help us develop the capacity to carry more. They build endurance and perseverance. Battles in the field are not sudden and dramatic like David and Goliath. Most just slowly drain people over time. But David learned endurance in the field. He learned to stay faithful under pressure.

- ◆ Where are you feeling the pressure right now? What feels too heavy to handle?
- ◆ What is your typical response when you're overloaded and overwhelmed?
- ◆ Where have you seen God increasing your capacity?

When David finally stood in front of Goliath, he didn't see a completely new battle. He said, "This Philistine will be like one of them." David had history with God.

- ◆ The lion taught him courage.
- ◆ The bear taught him endurance.
- ◆ The sheep taught him faithfulness.

The valley simply revealed what had already been built in the field.

(You can **close in prayer** here – or **keep the conversation going!**)

SLING ANOTHER STONE

Read Psalms 78:70-72 aloud:

'He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens; from tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance. And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them.'

It's interesting that when Scripture looks back on David's life, it connects the sheep field to the throne. David wasn't just learning how to survive out there, or even

kill a single giant — he was becoming someone. The field shaped his character — his leadership.

Nobody else saw value in the sheep season, but God did.

Sometimes we think the important parts of our story start later. When the opportunity comes. When the promotion happens. When life finally changes. But some of the most important things God does in us happen in ordinary seasons that feel repetitive, unnoticed, or slow.

- ◆ Have you ever had a season that felt unimportant at the time, but later realized it shaped you in a major way?
- ◆ What qualities do you think God develops most deeply in hidden seasons of life?
- ◆ A lot of people want to skip ahead to the influential parts of life, but the foundation of that influence is built in humble places.

David didn't know the sheep field was preparing him for leadership one day. He just stayed faithful where he was. The field was not a distraction or diversion from David's calling. It was part of it.

- ◆ What part of your current season are you most tempted to rush through?
- ◆ How would your mindset change if you believed your current situation was essential to your future situation?

PRAYER POINT

This week, pray that God will help you stay faithful in the small things. Ask Him to grow consistency, courage, and endurance in your life, and thank Him that He is using even the hidden seasons to prepare you for what's ahead. Amen!

NEXT STEPS

Let's also put that faith to work! Here are some helpful suggestions we can implement this week to strengthen our foundation:

Commit to a [Lion & Bear Rep](#)

(Share the link with your Group, and watch them take those courageous next steps.)