
Where's Your Heart At?

Part 3 - Hope Through the Battle

Have you ever felt as if your life has wandered into a battle?

- + Hebrews 6:18
- + Romans 8:24-31
- + John 16:33

The power of our hope is in the One who fights for us. Are we prepared to follow the King Jesus through the battle?

The Setting of David and Goliath

1 Samuel 17:4-11

Recognise the Real Battle

1 Samuel 17:20-32

Battlefields Are Not Times of Spiritual Neutrality

.... You will either emerge weaker or stronger.

Prepare for Battle

1 Samuel 33-40

Three things stand out as we prepare for battle.

1. *Know your hope*
2. *Win your private battles*
3. *Remember your rocks.*

Act in the Battle

1 Samuel 41-51

Believe through the Battle

The theme that stands out through this whole passage hangs on what David believes through the battle, a hope that is as true today as it was then. (47) "...the battle is the Lord's." This belief held the power to turn the tide of Israel's battle, and enabled them to pass through the valley towards a greater promise ahead. David's victory was a foreshadow of one Jesus would accomplish for us. The hope of David is fully revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus who came to battle on our behalf.

I wonder what battles you might have where you need hope today. This past week I sat with a friend in a palliative care unit at the hospital and we talked about a hope. How hope is not about the size of our battle, nor our capacity to deal with it. But hope because of a promise sealed through a victory Jesus won at the cross on our behalf. Hope through whatever valley we must pass because of a rock that was rolled away from a tomb 2000 years ago. Jesus said (John 16:33), "*In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*" (NIV) That's a kind of hope you can build your life around. Are you ready to follow Him through the battle?

In the *Lord of the Rings* book Sam says, "It's like in the great stories, Mr. Frodo. The ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they

were. And sometimes you didn't want to know the end... because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad had happened? But in the end, it's only a passing thing.... Even darkness must pass."

Practical Reminders

Recognise the Real Battle: Seek God's perspective on whatever you face through prayer and scripture.

Prepared for Battle: let personal discipleship prepare you for greater things ahead.

Act in the Battle: let your hope in the Lord inspire and shape how you're choosing to live your life.

Believe through the Battle: it's not the size of the giant but the power found in the name of the Lord that secures victory.

Psalm 33:12-22 *(Corporate Reading)*

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people he chose for his inheritance.

13 From heaven the Lord looks down
and sees all mankind;

14 from his dwelling place he watches
all who live on earth—

15 he who forms the hearts of all,
who considers everything they do.

16 No king is saved by the size of his army;
no warrior escapes by his great strength.

17 A horse is a vain hope for deliverance;
despite all its great strength it cannot save.

18 But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him,
on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,
19 to deliver them from death
and keep them alive in famine.
20 We wait in hope for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.
21 In him our hearts rejoice,
for we trust in his holy name.
22 May your unfailing love be with us, Lord,
even as we put our hope in you. (NIV)

Discussion Questions

1. Do you have any “rocks” in your life – places of battle where God taught you something significant – that continue to shape your life today?
2. Are you facing any battles right now? If so, how might you be finding benefit in your time of prayer or in scriptures? Talk about what you sense the Lord is saying to you through this battle.
3. David puts his hope in the Lord, but he also allows his hope to motivate action. How does your hope shape the way you approach your “giants”?
4. There are many characters in this passage of David fighting Goliath. Can you identify with any of them? In what ways do their actions seem reasonable? What do you think it would take for them to begin to gain a hope in the Lord such as David had found?
5. It’s popular to talk about the promises of God, but we often forget to talk about the day to day process of discipleship that enables us to arrive at that destination. In what ways are you allowing the discipleship process to shape you for your next steps ahead? Or, in what ways do you believe the Lord would have you develop for something greater ahead?