

“Living a Victorious Life”

Obviously, we are not talking about having victory in war with an army full of men and weapons that make physical military conquest, similar to the Old Testament battles of Israel. Although, I must add, Israel won her battles when she walked with God. He would give her the victory. Israel knew her victory came from the Lord, and it was the Lord God of Israel who helped her carry on the fight and win the battle! He was the source of her strength and her victory.

Deuteronomy 20:1 When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

Our Battles today may not be the same as Israel had to fight in the OT, but our Victory and our Strength in the battle still comes from the same Source, which is “The LORD our God.”

No matter what kind of battle we face in this life we must be aware we do not stand alone when we are in Christ; nor are we to fight in our own strength. God promises to be with His people even in the heat of a battle.

As we walk with the LORD, our victories come from trusting that His presence and His power are with us, for us, and working in us.

We are going to talk about a spiritual fight within our soul. It is one of several battles that many encounter. It is one of the devil's tactics to steal our joy, and therefore our strength, and keep us from moving forward in God's plan for our life. This battle is known as discouragement, sometimes even turning into despair.

One example of this is found with the prophet Elijah.

1 Kings 19:4 Elijah ran into the desert and sat under a tree and said "I have had enough Lord. Take my life..."

"Living a Victorious Life"

"Defeating Discouragement"

Through out the Bible the Lord commands His people to not be faint hearted, to be of good courage, not to be discouraged, take heart and cheer up.

Deuteronomy 20:3 Hear, Israel: Today you are going into battle against your enemies, do not be fainthearted, or afraid; do not panic...

Joshua 1:9 When God selected Joshua to replace Moses as the leader of the Israelites, some of His first words to Joshua were:

“Have I not commanded you: be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD our God will be with you wherever you go.

Jesus Said:

John 16:33 In the world you will have trouble, but be of good cheer; (take courage) (cheer up) (be confident, be filled with joy) (take heart) (emboldened from within) (radiate warm confidence) for I have overcome the world.

Gr. Thlipsis: trouble; properly, pressure (what constricts) used of a narrow place that “hems someone in,” especially internal pressure. It carries the challenge of coping with the pressure.

You must realize you have WHO it takes to overcome any challenges you are facing in this world. He is your strength and victory. Through Christ we are given victory over our enemies, whether they are discouragement, despair, etc.

The One who already overcame lives in you who believe. We have His overcoming power within us. We must believe this and act on it.

Apostle Paul had much opportunity to be discouraged and fall into despair, although he never gave in to the devil’s temptations. He always remained faith filled in every trouble, because he knew God through Christ was with him and in him.

2 Corinthians 4:9 We are hard pressed on all sides, but not crushed, perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, struck down, but not destroyed.

Philippians 3:12 ...I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ Jesus...

Romans 15:4 Apostle Paul says, "That everything that was written in the past was written down to TEACH us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Today we going to learn something about living a victorious life through a look at the life of David. Some of this is inference from knowing things about David. Nevertheless, we will be encouraged!

In **1 Samuel 30** we read of events that occurred over 1,000 years before the Lord Jesus was born. The truth in this chapter if applied can help us through distress and difficulty, trouble and trial, causing us to grow strong in the LORD.

Main Scripture:

1 Samuel 30:6 David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him, but David encouraged Himself in the LORD his God.

Background info: After the death of Samuel the Prophet, David joined forces with the Philistine enemies in an attempt to escape King Saul's assassination attempt.

This chapter 30 begins with David and his 600 men arriving at home in Ziklag from a 3 day journey on foot; approximately walking 70 miles. David and His 600 men were wanting to join in the battle with the Philistine army against Israel, but the Philistines decided not to trust David and made him go back home to Ziklag. Instead of returning home and finding rest, the entire hometown was burned down to the ground, nothing but ashes was left.

1 Samuel 30:1 Now the Amalikites had attacked Ziklag and burned it down, and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it. They killed none of them, but carried them off.

1 Samuel 30:3 When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive, so David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep.

1 Samuel 30:5 David's two wives had been captured...

1 Samuel 30:6 David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and daughters. But David encouraged Himself in the LORD His God.

Their home had been plundered and all the wives and children had been taken captive as slaves. They were OVERWHELMED and DEVASTATED by this tragic loss. These warriors WEPT ALOUD until they actually had no more strength left to weep. David and his men were physically EXHAUSTED, and emotionally depleted, totally DEVASTATED, and HEARTBROKEN because EVERYTHING was burned down and everyone was missing!

It did not take long before the men became violently angry and pointed the finger of accusation towards their leader, David, whom they felt was responsible, perhaps for not having some of the men stay behind to protect their home from such an attack.

DAVID'S FOLLOWERS WANTED TO KILL DAVID! He had fled from King Saul's assassination attempt; now his followers and friends wanted to stone him to death!

But in the midst of His Distress: "David Encouraged Himself in the Lord"

David knew how to fight back:

1 Samuel 30:6 But David "Encouraged" himself in the "LORD HIS GOD."

1 Samuel 30:6 But David "Strengthened" himself in the "LORD HIS GOD."

David, in the face of all this, however, found strength & courage to go on. His encouragement to go on was found in the "LORD his God." He needed strength for the moment & strength for tomorrow!

It's great to be supported and encouraged by others when we face adversity. The Bible even explicitly tells us to encourage each other:

1 Thessalonians 5:14 And we urge you... encourage the disheartened, help the weak...

Hebrews 10:25 not giving up meeting together ... but encouraging one another - all the more as you see the Day approaching.

But there are times you will not have church friends or family to stand with you, and you like David, will stand with no one and nothing but "God Alone." David was a warrior. He knew how to fight lions, bears, and Goliath the giant! He also knew how in the spirit realm to fight despair and discouragement. He knew who would help him overcome. He knew spiritual truth to overcome.

Let's look at David's life, and let's see what helped him to be an OVERCOMER. How did he strengthen and encourage himself in the Lord? How did he remain strong in the Lord?

1 David Knew God as "The Lord His God."

It is not by accident that the Scripture says, the “Lord His God.” It could have said the “God of Israel,” but it clearly says, the “Lord His God.”

The recurring theme in the psalms of David is the intimate & personal knowledge of God: My God, My Shepherd, My Light, My Salvation. A personal relationship with His God and a deep sense of God’s presence with him was the stronghold of his life. This was a source of strong encouragement to David.

Psalms 18 I love you O Lord, My Strength,
The LORD is MY Rock, MY Fortress, and MY Deliver,
MY God is MY Rock, in whom I take refuge,
MY Shield, and the horn of MY Salvation, MY Stronghold,
I will call upon the LORD who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved
from my enemies.

Psalms 7:1 O Lord My God, in you do I take refuge...

Psalms 59:17 You are MY Strength, I sing praise to you; You God, are MY
Fortress, MY God on whom I rely.

David knew that he stood in a personal, individual relationship to God, and God to him. In this crisis was the conviction that he KNEW GOD as his very own, and that God was with him, even now. It was HIS GOD that David laid hold of at the moment of despair when all was dark and hopeless.

“The God of Israel” or the “God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob” does not convey a personal relationship to God. It would not be enough for him, in his time of despair, to encourage himself with a general thought of Almighty God, but the Truth needed was that the “God of Israel” is “MY God” that I can call upon. He is MY God with me now; a very present help in time of need.

There was only one true possession in all the world He knew He still had, that he could call his own at that moment. And that was “His God.” The most important possession he could hold on to.

Psalm 16:5 The Lord is MY portion and MY cup; you hold My lot.

Everything else was gone; but the Amalikites had not stolen “The Lord His God” from him. He could no longer say, ‘my house, my land, my possessions,’ but he could say, “My God” thou are with me now.

Especially in times of difficulty it is not enough to know that God so loved the world that He gave us His Son, Jesus & that Jesus is Savior of the world; but to know God loves me & is with me, and Jesus died for me and loves me makes all the difference in our troubled times.

David was in a position of possible death. But the truth of having the “Lord His God” who was “present with him,” lifted him above any despair. This Truth is critical for us as well. This Truth is the first step in overcoming. It is the beginning of light and hope in any dark hour for us.

Can you truly say from your heart:

Psalm 91:2 "He is my Refuge, and My Fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.

Can you say with certainty that Jesus is "My Lord and My God" who is with me now & who will not fail me?

Psalms 23:1, 4 The Lord is My Shepherd; I shall not want. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for "You are with me".

We have this very comfort from the Scriptures, but the added blessing of having God "IN" us, as well. **John 14:16-17**... for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Hebrews 13:5b Amplified version: for He God Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. I will not, I will not, I will not in any degree leave you helpless nor forsake nor let you down - nor relax My hold on you! Assuredly not! So we take comfort and are encouraged and confidently and boldly say, The Lord is My Helper; I will not be seized with alarm...What an antidote for dismay, despair or any discouragement!

2 David knew He Belonged to God.

David recognized not only that he had a hold on God as his own, but David recognized God had a hold on him. God had full possession of David. He belonged to God.

Psalm 139:5 You hem me in behind and before; You have placed your hand upon me.

Psalm 100:3 It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.

David knew he belonged to God. This in itself brought a great strength to His heart. His heart was established in this truth: I am yours and you are mine. We can have the same confidence and encouragement as David, knowing we belong to the LORD God through faith in Jesus Christ. David knew he was loved by God. God had called him. He had been chosen by God. David knew he had been anointed by God. He knew he had been set apart for God's service. David knew he had been appointed for a certain mission in life. He knew God had His hand on him. And the encouraging Good News is that in Christ you also have God's hand on you! God has His hold on you. YOU also belong to Him.

Song of Solomon 6:3 I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine.

Ephesians 1:4 Just as (in His love) He chose us in Christ (actually selected us for Himself as His own)...so that we would be holy (that is, consecrated, set apart for Him...

2 Corinthians 1:21,22 He anointed us, set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts.

Romans 14:8 So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Ephesians 2:10 We are His workmanship (His master work, a work of art) created in Christ Jesus...

David knew His God could and would bring light out of this darkness. He believed some way or another that His God would work salvation for him. Knowing who you belong to and who has committed Himself to you in faithful love brings encouragement & hope into a hopeless heart. It will bring strength for us to move on and press forward, knowing we are His and in His hands.

John 10:29 My Father who has given them to Me, is greater and lighter than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. The Father and I are one.

3 David Had a Heart of Praise & Thanksgiving.

Praise & thanksgiving were never too far from David's lips, even in times of distress. David wrote 75 of the 150 psalms in the Bible. David did not perhaps have time to think of a psalm of praise to sing, but his heart had already been established as a worshiper of God. He had cultivated a heart of praise, and thankfulness since he was a young shepherd boy.

David knew the practice of praising God and thanking God daily even in his difficulty. He knew the peace and power of communing with God in this way. Even in his Psalms of lament David would pour out his heart to God with complaining, give his request, and then end on a faith-filled positive note of trust in God and praise to Him.

The fact that he had a ready heart, regardless of the situation, that would look up with trust in God, praising Him for who He was, and thanking Him for what He had already done was a means of strength & encouragement to David. This was part of his victory over the enemy.

Psalm 34:1,2 I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

Psalm 100:4 Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with Praise; give thanks to Him and Praise His name, For the Lord is good and His love endures forever...

1 Thessalonians 5:18 Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you who along to Christ Jesus.

David knew that the burning of Ziklag was an attack of the enemy, but if He would cave into hopelessness or despair the enemy would have full & total victory over his life. David had a spiritual battle within to fight. If He gave up in despair he would lose, as well as not fulfill God's call on His

life. He had been anointed to be King! He had to press on to fulfill God's will. So do we!

We too must recognize discouragement, dismay, despair, are all the work of the enemy to defeat us. Part of our spiritual armor in waging war & defeating the enemy is holding up the shield of faith and saying, "NO devil, you will not discourage nor defeat me."

As we walk in faith and trust; praise and thanksgiving to God are very critical in our battle strategy for victory.

Ephesians 6:13... put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you've done everything stand...

Praising God & keeping a thankful heart as a daily lifestyle, before a raging battle begins, strengthens us, as well as, makes way for a sure victory when the heat is on.

Psalms 86:1-12 Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my soul... Hear my prayer, O LORD. And attend to my plea for mercy. In the day of my distress I call on You... O Lord, there is none like You... I will praise you, O Lord MY God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever.

4 David Remembered God's Goodness.

David had a choice. He could either, as too many of us do, stand there and look, and look, and see nothing but his disasters, or he could look past them; and see what God had promised, and what He had already done. David occupied His thoughts with the good things God had already done; KNOWING GOD WOULD HELP HIM NOW.

Psalm 27:13 (AMP) I would have despaired had I not believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

We too must bring to remembrance all the good & all the blessings that God has given to us in our life. Perhaps we need to get out that journal or start a journal today and begin to log all the good things God has done.

Psalm 106:1 Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever.

- He remembered the time when he faced the lion and the bear and killed them with his very own hands by the grace of God.
- He remembered when God allowed him to kill the giant, Goliath, with only one stone. David knew Goliath was an uncircumcised Philistine who had no covenant with God, therefore he knew the victory belonged to him.

- He remembered how God had anointed him through Samuel to be a king of Israel, and God's promise would come to pass.
- He remembered how he was delivered from King Saul throwing a javelin to kill him.
- He remembered how Michal let him down the window so he could escape, and his life was spared.
- He remembered how God had spared his life time and time again from the threats of King Saul.

Psalm 106:7 O thanks to the Lord for he is good, His steadfast love endures forever.

5 David Spoke the Word of Truth.

The Targum (the ancient Aramaic interpretation of the Hebrew Bible) says "He strengthened himself in the WORD" of the Lord his God; the Truth of God's Word was his strength and encouragement.

This just speaks volumes! In times of discouragement or despair we need to keep God's Word in our mouth. Reading the Word is necessary, but keeping the Word in our heart and in our mouth is powerful when resisting the enemy. God's spoken Word has great power.

Psalm 91:4 He will cover you with his feathers and under his wings, you will take refuge. His Truth, shall be thy shield and buckler.

The words of the original Hebrew powerfully convey the thought of "David's taking ACTION" involved in securing His victory and His holding on to God. The Hebrew translation conveys EFFORT, PERSISTENT and CONTINUOUS. He had to set himself & MAKE EFFORT to be encouraged and overcome. He did this with the Truth of God's Word. God will give it to us, but we will not receive it passively. We must know and keep God's Word in our heart and mouth to encourage ourselves in the Lord.

Preaching the Word of Truth to ourselves is helpful and powerful. Preaching Truth to ourself is a wonderful way to keep ourselves strong & encouraged; using the Truth of God's Word as a weapon to defeat the enemy works!

Jesus used the Word to defeat Satan in His time of temptation.

Matthew 4:3 The tempter came to Jesus and said, "If you the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Matthew 4:4 Jesus answered, "It is written: Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Perhaps, David remembered & declared these Words over His circumstance:

Deuteronomy 31:6 Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.

Exodus 34:6 "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God.... Abounding in love and faithfulness...

Psalm 23:1 The LORD is MY Shepherd (to feed, to guide and to shield me) I shall not want.

The best way to fight any discouragement is to speak and meditate on the Truth of God's Word.

Ephesians 6:17 Stand firm.... And take The helmet of Salvation and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

In a War you must be active; passivity can lead to your defeat.

What does God's Word promise you in the mist of your battle? Remind yourself of it and speak it aloud to yourself. .

Perhaps, David brought to mind His own Psalms.

Psalm 23: 24 yea thou I go through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil Thou are with me

Psalm 27:1 The LORD is my Light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the Stronghold of my life, whom shall I dread?

Psalm 27:10 ... the LORD cares for me.

Psalm 121:2 I lift up my eyes to the hills - where does my help come from? My Help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth!

Psalm 73:26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever

Psalm 42:5 Why, my soul, are you so downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God ...

Psalm 42:11 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your HOPE in God, for I will yet praise Him, MY Savior and MY God.

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Part of our victory comes from having God's Word in our heart and in our mouth; declaring God's Word in faith over our situation is part of a successful battle strategy.

Revelation 12:11 They overcame by the blood of there Lamb, and by the Word of their testimony....

6 David Knew to Turn to God in Prayer.

Don't give in to despair or discouragement. Present your situation to the LORD in faith, believe Him and receive His peace.

1 Peter 5:7 Cast your care upon the Lord, for He cares for you.

David prayed to God for wisdom & direction as to what to do?

1 Samuel 30:8 David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this band of raiders? Will I overtake them? And He answered him, "Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them, and you will certainly recover all.

David prayed and got a Word of direction from the LORD. This in itself gave him encouragement.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all; but when you ask you should not doubt, that person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

Philippians 4:5,6 The Lord is near Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

We all face battles in this life with many opportunities to be discouraged or even despair. But as David did so should we. Instead of caving in, falling apart, giving into defeat or turning his back on God, he TURNED HIS FACE TO GOD and He CHOOSE TO LOOK TO GOD in Prayer. We must also turn to the Lord in faith filled prayer. He is always there to answer us and to give direction and help.

7 **David Walked in LOVE.**

Don't ever stop obeying God's will to love others, even when you are feeling down. Don't get stuck in disappointment. Don't get stuck in your own trouble. Keep going forward in faith and the love walk even in your time of distress.

Galatians 5:6 The only thing that counts is Faith expressing itself through Love.

Guanine faith will obey God by walking in love no matter how much you hurt. It is an antidote for the discouragement. We need to learn how to get ourselves off our mind. David knew walking in love and kindness even in a crisis would reap a good harvest.

Samuel 30:11 Now his men found an Egyptian servant in the field and brought him to David. They gave the man water to drink and food to eat, 12 and a piece of a fig cake and two clusters of raisins. So he ate and was revived, for he had not had any food or water for 3 days and 3 nights.

13 Then David asked him, "To who do you belong, and where are you from?" He said, "I am an Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite! My master abandoned me 3 days ago when I fell ill. We raided the Negev... and burned down Ziklag!"

Instead of reacting negatively and taking vengeance on the enemy who had destroyed his home and taken His wives,

15 David said, "Will you lead me to these raiders?" And the man replied, swear by God that you will not kill me... and I will lead you.

16 So he led David down, and there were the Amalekites spread out over all the land, eating, drinking, and celebrating the great amount of plunder they had taken.

17 And David struck them down from twilight until the evening of the next day.

18. So David recovered it all!

David continues to walk in love after the great victory given to him by God.

23 the Lord has protected and delivered us from the raiders... The share of the one who went to battle will match the share of the one who stayed with the supplies. All will share alike...David showed generosity & kindness to all because of God's goodness to him.

26 When David arrived in Ziklag, he sent some of the plunder to his friends, the elders of Judah, saying, " here is a gift for you from the plunder of the LORD's enemies.

David sent gifts to all the territories he and his men had roamed.

When you are hurting or feeling down, one of the best things you can do to encourage yourself and be strengthened in the Lord is to walk in love and help someone else who is hurting like you or worse than you.

Luke 6:38 Give and it will be given to you, a good measure, pressed sown, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap, for with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

In conclusion: Be Encouraged in the Lord.

1. **Know God is your God through a personal relationship with Jesus.**

Do you know Jesus as your Lord and God? If so, He is your God who is with you always. Be encouraged! If not, ask Christ to forgive you and be Lord and Savior of your life. He will surely make Himself know!

2. **Know that in Christ you belong to a loving and faithful God.** He has

his hand on your life and holds you in His hands. You belong to Him. Be encouraged!

3. **Cultivate a heart of praise and thanksgiving.** Keep your eyes on God's greatness. Praise Him. Find things to be thankful for at all times, and in all circumstances. This will continually strengthen and encourage your heart in the Lord.

4. **Remember and rehearse His goodness to you.** Keep a written journal of all the blessings you know God has given you, and all the good things He has done in your life. Do not take for granite anything.

Thank Him. Review and count your blessings one by one. Your heart will be steadily encouraged in the Lord.

5. **Speak God's Word to yourself out loud in faith.** Memorize and speak God's Word daily to strengthen your heart. Feed your soul this way. Find Scripture that applies to your situations and let the devil hear it. Let your own heart hear the Truth. You will be encouraged and strengthened in the Lord.
6. **Always bring everything to God in prayer.** Know He wants to help you and believe He will, as well as give you wisdom and direction in your time of need. Be encouraged He says, "Ask and you will receive."
7. **Always keep walking in love.** Faith in God and love for others are a powerful duo! You can't have one without the other. As you do not allow yourself to be self focused, but reach out to those around you in practical loving ways, you will receive a joy and encouragement that come straight from God Himself.