

It's Only a Distraction

Mik R. Flores

TLF Executive Head Servant

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2 Timothy 2:3-4 Overcome every form of evil as a victorious soldier of Jesus, the Anointed One. For every soldier called to active duty must divorce himself from the distractions of this world, so that he may fully satisfy the one who chose him.

- Christianity is a call to battle. We are likened to a soldier - that we are to overcome every form of evil.
- God is calling us to defeat our enemy, but the devil will keep us distracted from fighting the things that we are called to defeat.

Main passage: 1 Samuel 17 - The victory of David over Goliath

The Israelites and Philistines are long-standing enemies. They would battle at the Valley of Elah to decide which people should serve the other. The Israelites were scared because the Philistines had Goliath, who is not an ordinary soldier, on their side.

- If David got distracted by his brother Eliab and King Saul, it could have ended differently.
- When God told Samuel to go to the house of Jesse to anoint the next King of Israel, he thought it was Eliab because he is tall, and he reminded him of King Saul.
- God said, you are not to look at the external appearance of a person but the heart. We tend to look at life externally, but we need to stop because what is more important is what's within.

1 Samuel 17:28 Now Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger was kindled 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 presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle."

- Eliab judged David's motives and questioned his credibility.
- When David was rebuked by his brother publicly, he could have chosen to quit.
- David was more concerned about God's cause than his feelings. He did not let the distraction hinder him from doing what God has asked him to do.
- The devil was trying to get David to fight the wrong person. Today, the enemy is doing the same thing to us; he wants us to focus on the distractions to hinder us from defeating the real enemy.
- If David got caught up in fighting Eliab, he would have never seen Goliath and would have never seen his victory.
- Some of us are defeated simply because we are distracted.

Practical things to learn and remember in the passage:

1. When we focus on our distractions, our Goliaths will continue to go unchallenged and will hunt and scare us. We need to go and defeat our real enemy. If we spend our time dealing with our distractions, we will be missing a lot of victories in our lives.
2. When we realize that we are fighting the enemy, we have to do what David did - he turned away from Eliab.

How do we know that we are fighting our Eliabs (distractions)?

If we are fighting something outside when what we need to fight are the things that are from the inside.

Example:

- A. God wants us to deal with unforgiveness, but if we are being distracted on being offended, then we will never be able to extend forgiveness to others.
- B. God wants us to deal with pride because He hates the proud. If we are so distracted by looking at other's mistakes, then we will not have time to look at our flaws; that we are never going to fight the sin of pride.
- C. God wants us to deal with the cravings of our flesh, the things that human nature wants, but God wants us to produce the fruits of the Spirit. If we are always distracted by trying to control how people respond, we are never going to defeat the real enemy. We will always find excuses.

1 Samuel 17:29-30 And David said, "What have I done now? Was it not but a word?" And he turned away from him toward another

- David turned away from his distraction, and it positioned him to face his real enemy. It positioned him to defeat Goliath.
- We are never going to get to our Goliaths if we keep on focusing on our Eliabs.
- We are never going to see our victory if we are always focusing on our distractions.
- David could have two alternate endings: If he did not obey his father to bring things to his brother, then he could have not seen Goliath.;if he argued with his brother and defended himself, he could have missed Goliath. It could have ended differently.
- Our choices in life can bring about alternate endings. It can either give us victory or defeat.
- The Eliab (distraction) in our lives is not our end. When we waste our time dealing with our distractions, we end up feeling frustrated and exhausted.

Biblical people that fought a good fight of faith:

Daniel: People were jealous of Daniel because he was favored by King Darius. They planned for him to compromise his faith. The plan was to not let people pray to God for 30 days. Anyone found doing so will be put to the lion's den. Daniel continued to pray, so he was put to the lion's den.

- The jealous people and the lion are just distractions. Daniel's real enemy is the spirit of compromise. God wants him to stand firm in his belief even if it means death for him.
- Daniel conquered the spirit of compromise, and so he came out of the lion's den unharmed.

Job: God allowed the devil to do what he needed to do but not to take Job's life.

- Job's real enemy was not him losing everything but was unfaithfulness to God.
- Job remained faithful, and God restored everything he lost.

The work of the devil is to lie, deceive, kill, and destroy, but our God can turn things around. Our God brings fullness of life; He is there to bring us victory. God can restore what the enemy has stolen. With our God, the best is yet to come.

Watch out! God is doing something great in our lives. Everything that we are going through serves a great purpose. God is looking at our best interests.

When we fight the battle of pride, generational curses are broken. God is the God of second chances and new beginnings.

1 Samuel 17:32-33 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." 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."

- For Saul, David was unqualified because of his age, size, and his being inexperienced. He was not a soldier or a warrior; he was a shepherd.

1 Samuel 17:34-36 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.

- David was showing Saul his resume. Despite the impressive resume, Saul saw David as only a boy.
- If David believed that he was limited and lacking in skills and abilities to fight Goliath because he was just a boy, then it could have ended differently.

Only has two meanings: *Lack and Limitation*

- We all have lacks and limitations in our minds. If only I were.....
- Limitation can weigh us down; it can restrict our faith; it makes us feel that there is no hope, it can obstruct our foresight.
- When we limit ourselves, we also limit what God can do in our lives.
- Our limitations do not tell our story; God tells our story. He is the author of our lives; He knows our beginning, our end, and everything in between.
- Tell your distractions and limitations that you are a child of God - there are no limitations with God.
- When you are pressed down by your limitations, remind yourself that you have a God who is limitless.
- Do not allow your defects to stop you from fighting your real enemy because your God is a God of possibilities.
- Anyone who opposes the purpose of God will be defeated. We need to eliminate the distractions.
- The story of our lives is for our victory and God's purpose.
- God already defeated our enemy; what we need to do is to eliminate our distractions. We are conquerors.
- Let us not limit our view of God. He is above and beyond.
- Remember that our God is bigger and stronger than anything that stops us from walking by faith.

1 Samuel 17:45-46 David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands.

- We have a God who is on our side; we have a God who fights the battle for us.

- When we call the name of the Lord, He comes and fights our battles.
- In the name of Jesus, the devil shivers and backs down; depression is defeated, and darkness is pushed away.
- The name of Jesus breaks chains and brings healing. His name is power and victory!

The battle ended the way God intended it to be because David chose to eliminate and turn away from the distractions.

Our choices in life can also bring alternate routes.

Knowing that God is on our side, we can confidently face our Goliaths - we are always on the winning side. **Victory is ours!**

Transcriber/Writer: Yvonne J. Gaviola

Editor: Ma. Vera I. Tuplano