

As David was anointed as king, though he was just a boy, the Spirit of God came on him, the text says. 1 Samuel: 16:13: “and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David.” One very interesting thing about doing a study throughout all of Scripture about the Holy Spirit in the Bible is how often the coming of the Spirit is associated with courage. David gets the Spirit, and the next thing you know, he is facing down a giant. It’s all through the Bible.

We live, in many ways, in a very safe country, far safer than many people have experienced down through history, yet all indications are that we are more anxious; we are more fraught with fears.

Where do you get courage? That’s what the passage is about.

Notice there are three figures here. Sometimes we miss that.

There’s Saul and the missing courage. There’s Goliath and the counterfeit courage. There’s David and the true courage.

### 1. Saul

Notice David says, “Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine.” The point, of course, of the first 31 verses is that everybody (and especially Saul) had lost heart. To lose heart means to lose courage, and they had. The king is not being kingly (Saul). The king’s army is not being kingly.

What is courage? In v. 32, David actually gives us a pretty good image that helps us. When he says, “Let no one lose heart ...” he is actually saying, “Let no one’s heart fall away, fall down, or fall back.” (See also 2 Corinthians 4 and Ephesians 6.) Courage is being able to do the right thing regardless of the danger and regardless of the consequences. The essence of courage is facing your heart’s greatest nightmare and doing the right thing anyway.

Look at Saul? Here’s where Saul reveals his cowardice. Saul disobeys God, and then he pounced on the loot to make himself rich. And he puts up a monument to his honor because of his military victory. He lies to Samuel & God. The only answer is he must still be small in his own eyes. He has no courage. So when he and his army face the Philistines and Goliath, he has no courage. Neither does his army. It’s David who has to remind Saul, “Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him.”

### 2. Goliath

In the story we have great detail about Goliath. *Now what’s all this detail? The narrator is giving us two alternate approaches to our understanding of courage—two alternate ways of dealing with fear.* He is not being as simplistic as to say, “Just stuff your fear.” He is giving us two different ways of dealing with fear to help you understand better the right way.

The way Goliath does it is the way the world does it. What does Goliath have? He has three things.

- First of all, he has physical prowess, brute strength.
- Secondly, he is high tech. David is low tech.
- Thirdly, he has self-esteem. He has incredible self-esteem.

Goliath’s courage, which is counterfeit courage, is it’s the banishing of fearful thoughts. It’s the banishing of fearful thoughts by looking at yourself & your resources with confidence because you’ve got what it takes. You’ve got the resources, the strength, you’ve surrounded yourself with all that you need.

Notice the problem.

- Goliath had banished all fear, but as a result, he was out of touch with reality. There was a danger.
- David is aware of the danger. And God is his reality.

What we really need is not banishing all thoughts of fear by looking at ourselves and our resources with confidence. We need something that helps us to do the right thing in spite of our fears.

### 3. David

God does not send the people an example. God does not send these cowards an example. He does not save them through inspiration or emulation but through imputation. What do I mean by imputation?

David is not an example. He is not an inspiration. He is a substitute. David was fighting as the legal representative of his people. Listen carefully. David was not just fighting for them; he was fighting as them. David saves through imputation. What happens to him is imputed to his people, because they’re in union with him. As a result of that, then his victory is imputed to them.

God sent the ultimate David, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ came, and even though He was weak, he was brave, perfectly brave, in your place. He was brave for you. When you believe in Him, God now imputes that to you and treats you, delights in you, as if you’d done everything Jesus has done. That’s what the Bible says.

Courage is not the absence of fear; it’s the presence of joy. Courage is not the absence of fear; it’s the presence of enough joy that you’re not afraid of the future.

How did Jesus handle it? How did Jesus become brave? It tells us in the book of Hebrews. It says, “Fix your eyes on Jesus, the *archegos*, (*archegos* is a Greek word that means champion) the champion of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, ran the race, endured the cross, despising the shame.”