



NO FEAR, NO DOUBT

Do you remember the story about David and Goliath? David was a young shepherd boy, and his father sent him to the army camp to take his brothers some food. When David got to the camp, he found tents full of soldiers who were scared. They were hiding. Why? Because a giant was parading in the battlefield, calling for someone to come fight him.

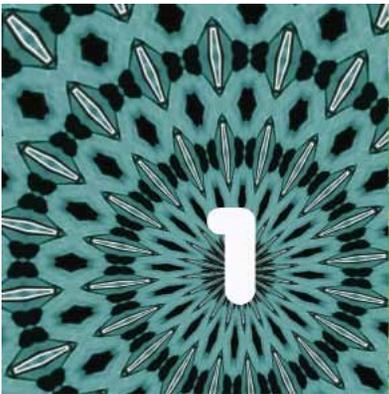
He was big. He was bad. He was a bully. And not one soldier wanted to fight him.

But David did.

Are you as brave as David?

WEEK ONE

HOW BIG IS YOUR FEAR?



Instead of telling God how big your storm is, tell the storm how big your God is!

- Unknown

You may not be in an army camp, but if you're a Christian, each day is a battle. Satan has his giant warriors parading in and out of your home, school and even your church. His warriors are big. His warriors are bad. His warriors are bullies. And they're calling you into battle.

What warriors? They're more familiar to you than you would think. They have names like Stress, Worry, Fear, Failure, Jealousy and Bitterness. They roam all over your life. They stake their claim to every part of you they can get. They get in between you and God. They stand up, tall and looming, in front of you and try to distract you from how big and mighty your God is.

See, the problem with the soldiers who were hiding in their tents is, they knew all about Goliath. They knew how big he was. They knew what size sandal he wore, what size sword he carried and how big around his biceps were. They had looked at him for so long that they couldn't see anything else but him. They had become consumed with thoughts about how big Goliath was.

David, on the other hand, was more focused on how big God was.

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When we are afraid, we tend to focus on our fears when we should be focusing on God.

Look up 2 Timothy 1:7. Write it here and memorize it this month: _____

When God is on our side, we don't have to be afraid! God doesn't want us to live life in fear. He wants us to live lives filled with His power and love.

That doesn't mean that we'll never be scared. Bad things are going to happen to us, and sometimes we will be afraid. But there's a big difference in being afraid of something and letting fear control you. Here's an example: A lot of people are afraid of flying in an airplane. But if you are so afraid that you let that fear consume you and you never get on an airplane, you might miss out on some wonderful opportunities God has for you. What if you were offered the opportunity to go on a mission trip overseas, and the only way to get there was flying? If you look at how big your fear of flying is and let it control you, you will probably never go on that trip. But if you give your fear to God and focus on Him, then you'll get to go on the trip. See the difference?

Are there any fears in your life that you are letting control you? What are they? How do they affect your relationship with God? How are they holding you back from accomplishing your goals? What could you accomplish if you gave those fears to God?

WEEK TWO

GOD IS BIGGER



*"Focus on giants - you stumble.
Focus on God - your giants tumble."*

- Max Lucado

David never saw Goliath before he decided to fight him. But he knew that his God was bigger than any giant that was roaming around looking for a fight.

So how do we defeat our giants? We have to do what David did. We have to focus on God. We have to have faith in Him.

Faith is the opposite of fear. Check out 2 Corinthians 5:7-8. What do these verses mean to you?

God has given us so many promises in His word. Psalm 103:2 says "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Look up these verses and match them to the good things God has promised us:

God has promised us so many good things, and all we have to do to get them is have faith in Him.

Psalm 103:12

New Life

2 Corinthians 3:17

Salvation

2 Corinthians 5:17

Freedom

Proverbs 16:3

Strength

Isaiah 26:3

Peace

Proverbs 2:6

Wisdom

Philippians 4:13

Forgiveness

Hebrews 5:9

Success

Of all the promises God has given us, the one hardest to understand completely may be His love for us. He knew before He ever created us that we would let Him down. He knew that we would mess up. He knew that we would fall. But He created us anyway. And then, after we did fall into sin, He gave His only, perfect Son as payment for our sins so we could spend an eternity with Him in Heaven. *That's what I call love!*

In 1 John 4:7-8, we learn that God is love. One of the most well known passages in the Bible is 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.

"[Love] suffereth long, and is kind; [love] envieth not; [love] vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. [Love] never faileth."

If God is love, then what do those verses tell you about God? _____



WEEK THREE

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH DOUBT?

*“Jesus answered and said unto them,
Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith,
and doubt not...ye shall say unto this mountain,
Be thou removed...and it shall be done.”*

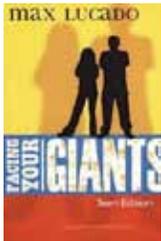
- Matthew 21:21

When David fought Goliath, he seemed fearless. People all around were amazed by his boldness and bravery. Fast forward a little and you’ll find the same David running from King Saul and hiding out in the mountains.

In 1 Samuel 27:1, David said, “I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in the coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.”

David, who had already been chosen and anointed as the next King of Israel, who had slain the giant, who had seen so many miracles worked by God, decided that this problem was too big for God to handle. Forget about all the things that he had been promised, forget about all the things God had already done... David was tired of running. At a time when he should have been focusing on God the most, David started to focus on Saul. David began to doubt.

Check out what Max Lucado said in his book, *Facing Your Giants* (Teen Edition):



“Listen to David...No hope, and most of all, no God. David focuses on Saul...He knows better. On brighter days and in healthier moments, David modeled heaven’s therapy for tough days. The first time he faced the Philistines in the wilderness, “David inquired of the Lord” ([1 Samuel] 23:2)...David kept God’s number on speed dial. Confused? David talked to God. Challenged? He talked to God. Afraid? He talked to God...most of the time. On this occasion, David talks to himself...David consults David.” (pages 72-73)

We’ve all been in that place (okay, so we all haven’t been running from a crazy king that wants to kill us, but we’ve been up against “mean girls” and losing streaks and bad circumstances that make us want to throw in the towel). Do you know how David feels? You’ve probably felt that way before—like nothing is going the way you planned, and you just aren’t sure if your plans are going to work out.

When things start spinning out of control, we begin to doubt ourselves, our plans, and sadly, we sometimes begin to doubt God.

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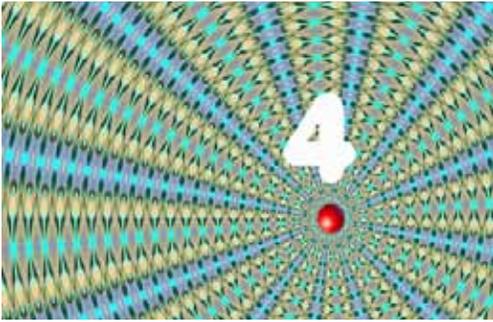
I like to fix things. I love having a project to work on and think about and fix. So when crazy things start to happen, it’s hard for me to remember that God is in control. Sometimes, when He doesn’t work things out the way I want them or when He doesn’t move as fast as I wanted, I start thinking up plans and schemes of my own. That’s exactly what David did.

Why is it a bad idea for us to try to “fix” things in our lives without consulting God? _____

Look up these verses: Jeremiah 29:11, Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalm 1:1-6. Who should we look to for guidance? _____

Who are some other people in the Bible that dealt with doubt? (Check out Matthew 14:22-33 and John 20:24-29) _____

What did Jesus tell them about doubt? _____



WEEK FOUR

DEFEATING FEAR AND DOUBT

*“Be merciful unto me, O God;
for man would swallow me up, O thou most High.
What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.
In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust;
I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.”*

- Psalm 56:1-4

Read Psalm 103. What are some of the benefits (promises) of God? _____

David wrote that Psalm after he took his place as King of Israel. Obviously, he didn’t stay in enemy territory, hiding and doubting forever. He came back to God.

One of the hardest things for Christians to accept is true forgiveness. David understood; he never had to doubt that God had taken away his sins (Psalm 103:12). Through the ups and downs of life, David made lots of mistakes. But he always came back to God, repented and found forgiveness.

He gave his fears and his doubts to God and chose to live a life of power, love and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). Will you make the same choice?

A few months ago, I was scanning the clearance tables at my local Christian bookstore and I found a student’s Bible study journal. It has spaces in it for Bible study notes from group and personal Bible studies, as well as pages for prayers and thoughts. As I was flipping through it, I thought about how much time we give to God every day.

For the next week, keep a journal like this. Keep a written record of all God says to you. Take notes of your pastor’s sermons. Write down a quote that makes you think or sparks your curiosity. Jot down the lyrics to a song that made you smile (or cry) and why it made you feel that way. Write down your prayer requests and write down how God answers them. Attach a picture of a beautiful sunset that reminded you of the awesomeness of your Creator. Write down your favorite memory verse and what it means to you. Write the hard questions you want to ask God, then look up the answers in the Bible. Make a list of the things you’re thankful for.

Then, at the end of the week, read what you’ve written.

This kind of exercise can show you just how much you’re allowing God to move in your life. The more you open up to what He wants to show you and do through you, you’ll notice His hand on your life more and more each day. You’ll be amazed at how blessed you really are. And when you focus on God and His blessings, your doubts and fears won’t seem so big.

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*I highly recommend reading the book *Facing Your Giants* (Teen Edition) by Max Lucado.

**Group Leaders: The movie, *Facing the Giants*, is a wonderful tool for teaching about faith and overcoming fear and doubt. Check it out with your group. (Most DVD’s also include a Study Guide you can use weekly or monthly to dig even deeper into God’s truths using the movie as your guide.)



ABOUT THE WRITER:

Christina Hopper is 23 years old. She attends Sulphur Springs FWB Church in Northport, Alabama. She is an active member of her local WAC group and coaches UPWARD Cheerleading at her church. Her favorite hobbies include reading, cooking, and photography. Check out her Facebook page, “Bible Study for Teens and Young Adults” or send her an email at cmhopper.warrior@gmail.com. She would love to hear from you.

