

“GOD RAISES UP HELP, MOSES”

Exodus 1-4

Biblical Principle: Moses was God’s instrument to deliver His people out of bondage.

I. The Israelites found themselves in tremendous peril. The Pharaoh who had been favorable to the Hebrews under Joseph’s reign was overthrown and now a new Pharaoh was on the throne. He despised and feared the Hebrew people so he enslaved them. (Exodus 1:14). God, however, heard their cry and he provided help. God called Moses into action to become the leader who would lead the people out of captivity. God always hears our prayers and answers in accordance to His plan and will. Our prayers are reinforced by the fact that God loves us and will never forget His children.

— Philippians 4:6-7

— Hebrews 13:5b

II. God’s hand was upon Moses from the beginning. The story tells us of his incredible journey of being adopted and educated in Pharaoh’s house. He was given such incredible opportunity. From the beginning of that journey, floating in the Nile as a tiny baby, until the time he came back to deliver the Israelites from captivity at age 80, God was working on Moses. He had setbacks, like losing his temper at age 40, and killing the Egyptian soldier, but God continued to mold and shape him to become the leader who would impact a whole nation, Israel, and eventually a whole world. Moses’ life is a prime example of what can happen through an ordinary person who is empowered by God. Moses had to learn to trust God and not allow excuses to stand in the way of his service and obedience (see Exodus 4:1, 10, 13). What excuses have stood in the way of you fully experiencing God’s power through you? Being a servant and a leader requires faith and trust. It also requires total dependence on God. As Henry Blackaby said “when we say, ‘we can’t’, we say more about what we believe about God, than what we believe about ourselves.”

— Zechariah 4:6

— Acts 1:8

— Ephesians 1:18-21

— 2 Corinthians 1:8-10

— Philippians 4:13

III. The mission Moses was given was a mission that only God could do. To bring two million people out of slavery with very little resources, and then to transplant them to another country and build them into a functioning society was definitely a God sized task. One important quality which is essential for healthy ministry is to learn to walk by faith and not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5:7) We are limited, but God is not. Faith is a realm beyond our five senses. Moses would see many things that logic couldn’t explain (i.e. the Red Sea part), and we will too, when we rest in God’s abilities and allow Him to work through us.

— Romans 1:17

— Hebrews 11:1

“GOD ESTABLISHES PASSOVER”

Exodus 7-12

Biblical principle: Because of the Passover lamb, God’s judgment passed over the Israelites.

I. After Moses had confronted the king, Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go. Thus, God sent 10 plagues upon the land of Egypt:

1. The plague of blood in the Nile (Pharaoh’s magicians were able to counterfeit some of the miracles or plagues Moses and Aaron performed -
- see 2 Corinthians 11:13-15).
2. The plague of frogs on the land.
3. The plague of gnats.
4. The plague of flies.
5. The plague on their livestock.
6. The plague of boils.
7. The plague of hail.
8. The plague of locusts.
9. The plague of darkness.
10. The plague of death on the first born male.

II. The last plague was death which came to the first born male of each household. God said, however, that if they would prepare a lamb sacrifice and if they would place the blood over the door post, judgment would not come to that house. (It was an act of faith. Faith is always our response to God’s call and requirements). This was the beginning of “Passover,” which would include the offering of the “Passover Lamb.” It was to become a lasting ordinance for the people to observe every year, reminding them of God’s faithfulness and deliverance from bondage (Exodus 6:6-8 — the promise). Passover was to be observed on the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan) of the Jewish calendar (April in the English Calendar). It was a week long celebration, starting on Sunday — Monday with the selection of the lamb and culminating with the Passover observance at the end of the week (beginning at sundown Friday). It was a celebration for the Jewish community alone.

— Hebrews 11:6 — Romans 1:17b

III. Jesus has fulfilled the true meaning of Passover. He is the true Passover Lamb who gave his life’s blood for us at the cross to redeem us from our sin (John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:6-8). Anyone who trusts in Him, responds to him in faith, God will pass over at the judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). Furthermore, when Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples, the night before his crucifixion, he shared a much larger understanding of the meal with its true meaning now based on Him. We celebrate Communion with a faith and remembrance of Christ our Passover Lamb (Matthew 26:17-30; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32)

— Romans 8:1 — Acts 4:12 — Romans 5:1

“PARTING THE RED SEA”

Exodus 13:17-22; 14:5-31

Biblical Principle: There is no problem too great for God to handle.

I. The Israelites were now heading out into the unknown. They were promised a new home in the Promised land, but how that would come about was not yet known. They would have to trust the Lord for each step and for each turn along the way. God promised them that He would guide through it all. As a matter of fact, he gave them the evidence of His presence and of his provision by giving them the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21-22).

God has an awesome plan and promise for all of us, but we have to trust Him each step of the way and allow Him to guide us daily. It is trusting even when things don't make sense.

— Proverbs 3:5-6 — Jeremiah 29:11 — Matthew 28:19-20

II. Pharaoh changed his mind about allowing the Israelites to leave. He pursued them with his powerful army. The Israelites faced a problem too big for them to handle. In front of them was the Red Sea and behind them was the army of Pharaoh. There was death in front and death behind. They cried out to the Lord (Exodus 14:10), and God answered. He told them not to be afraid and to be still, that He would handle their enemy. (Exodus 14:13-14). He parted the Red Sea and defeated Pharaoh's powerful army.

God gives us problems at times that are too big for us to handle. He uses these moments to grow our trust (Exodus 14:31) and to refine our character. God allows such moments to make us more of what He wants us to be and less of what the world has made of us. Hanging on at times is not easy, but it is through such times that we encounter God in our most powerful experiences.

— 2 Corinthians 1:8-10 — 1 Peter 5:6-11 — Romans 8:37

III. When we face overwhelming circumstances, our own Red Sea moments, there are three important things to remember and cling to:

1. Hold on to the unfailing love of God. — 1 John 3:1; Psalm 13:5
2. Trust Him with your life. — Psalm 20:7; Psalm 46:10
3. God has a great plan for your life. — Jeremiah 29:11

IV. When God delivered the Israelites, they celebrated God. (Exodus 15:1-18) Living in constant celebration and gratitude to God is key to a healthy and vibrant walk with Christ. It keeps us from discouragement and depression. Learn the art of seeing God's grace daily and celebrate it.

— Philippians 4:4-7 — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

“THE ISRAELITES COMPLAIN”

Exodus 16:1-21, 17:1-7

Biblical Principle: Complaining is evidence of a lack of faith in God.

I. Within three months after God had delivered the Israelites from Egypt and parted the waters of the Red Sea, they began to complain against Moses and God. Amazingly, they had forgotten all that God had done, and they so quickly took their eyes off of the plan that God had promised them. An ungrateful attitude had set in, and their whole perspective changed to despair and defeat. Their bitterness led to accusation and attack against Moses. The bottom line problem had more to do with their lack of faith, than their lack of resources. **Bad attitude and lack of faith go hand in hand.**

-- Philippians 2:14-15 — James 3:13-17 — Philippians 2:1-8

Complaining and grumbling are evidence of a lack of faith. God will always supply our needs if we will trust him. We must differentiate between needs and wants, however. Many times our wants are driven by selfish motives and greedy desires. They frustrate us and lead us to lash out, instead of finding contentment. **Contentment** is based upon being thankful for what we have and living under the reality that we have what we have by God's grace. Living daily in the awareness of God's grace avoids being discontent.

— 1 Timothy 6:6-10 — Philippians 4:11-13, 19

II. Another amazing characteristic of this story has to do with how quickly they wanted to return back to their life of slavery instead of trusting and receiving God's plan. (Exodus 16:3). We as believers many times are tempted to go back to our old sinful life when things get tough. **Discouragement is a sign that things are moving us away from God, not toward him.** Sometimes the problem has to do with not spending quality quiet time in prayer and Bible study. Also, worship loses its depth in our hearts. These ingredients are key factors in guarding our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. They protect our direction and decisions, keeping them God focused and not world focused.

— Colossians 3:16 — Hebrews 12:2-3 — 2 Peter 2:22 — Matthew 13:20-23

III. Complaining and murmuring threw the camp into disunity. Complaining and murmuring in the church among God's people will do the same. It tarnishes our testimony and deters our effectiveness in ministry. **Jesus said that unity among God's people would be the greatest way to demonstrate the reality of Christ to a lost world.** Respect for leadership and commitment to being a Bible-centered, humble follower are essential to being a healthy church. There is power in unity.

— Hebrews 13:7, 17 — John 17:20-23

“THE TEN COMMANDMENTS”

Exodus 20:1-17

Biblical Principle: God established rules of conduct for us that were meant to honor and love Him and to relate lovingly to others.

I. God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai. He wrote them on two stone tablets. (Exodus 32:15-16; 34:28) They were given by the very hand of God. God revealed his heart and himself to the people through his word. God’s word, both Old Testament and New Testament, is revealed by him. **God’s truth is not discovered, but he has made himself known to us.** We would have never understood God outside of his revelation. He has given us truth to guide and transform us into reflections of himself.

— 2 Timothy 3:15-17 — 1 Thessalonians 2:13 — 2 Peter 1:19-20

II. The ten Commandments are divided into two parts: One through four is our relationship with God. He calls us to commitment to Him alone. The second part, five through ten, is how we are to treat others. It is summed up by Jesus’ statement in Matthew 22:37-40 to love God with all we are and to love others as well. God wants us to love him with our total being, and to love others as we would desire to be loved. Jesus proclaimed often the importance of love. In fact, it was the very core of the gospel.

— John 13:34-35 — John 14:21 — 1 Corinthians 13:1-8

III. . All human beings have sinned and fallen short of God’s Standards, his commands. (Romans 3:23) We have failed at upholding and flawlessly maintaining the Ten Commandments. Because we have fallen short we need a savior, Jesus Christ, who was God with us. He was in the line of David, fully human, but fully Divine. He was without sin and therefore became the perfect offering for us to take away our sin. 2 Corinthians 5:21.

We are saved by his grace, not by our works or the Law. **The purpose of the Law was meant to point out our weaknesses and to lead us humbly to God.** Pride keeps us from God and is at the root of religion, man’s efforts to earn God’s favor. Jesus came to set us free from the pursuit of regulation driven religion and bring us to God by his grace through the blood of Christ into a perfect relationship with God. Jesus fulfilled the law, and therefore ushered in the age of grace.

— Matthew 5:17 — Romans 10:4 — Colossians 2:13-15 — Romans 3:20

“THE GOLDEN CALF”

Exodus 32

Biblical Principle: We must never allow anything in our life to become more important than the Lord.

I. Moses was still on Mount Sinai receiving the Law from the Lord when the Israelites began to worship false gods (the idol in the form of the calf). They began to allow a false substitution for the real God, leading them into sin. The worship of the Golden Calf, as had been part of the pagan worship traditions, was combined with sexual misconduct, promiscuity or an orgy type of atmosphere (Exodus 32:6, “revelry”). This was common to their pagan neighbor’s practices, and it seemed right to them. It was, however, an unhealthy and unholy substitution of the true God.

The world’s ways seem so right to us many times, but in reality, they are destructive to our walk with Christ and the quality of our life. We feel pressure to conform and to join in out of fear of rejection or panic of losing out on something. This path of compromise always leads to disillusionment and destruction. Our intimate walk with Christ suffers and we lose our joy and peace in the process. Nothing can substitute for God, not family, friends, worldly possessions, money nor anything else.

— Matthew 16:16 — Romans 1:18-32 — Psalm 115:4-8 — 1 John 5:18-21

II. Aaron, Moses’ brother, is a prime example of an unhealthy response to our sin. When Moses returned and confronted his brother, he immediately resorted to blame and excuses. (Exodus 32:21-24). His outlandish explanation of how the idol came to be is parallel with our excuses and explanations for the wrong choices that we cover up. Blame and excuses do not lead to repentance and recovery in our walk with the Lord. They remain as obstacles to the blessings of God in our life. True repentance is to turn away from sin and be free in God’s grace that is ours in Christ Jesus.

— Luke 15:1-24 is the greatest description of what God desires in the area of repentance. He uses the three parables of the sheep, the coin, and the prodigal son. Jesus’ point is that heaven rejoices when there is “true” repentance (Luke 15:7, 10, 17). The son demonstrated what it means to turn around and run back to the father with a different heart and open willingness to learn and live in the Father’s will. No blaming, no excuses, no continued recycling of bad behavior. Healing begins with acknowledging our wrong and being open to God’s leadership to live in a right direction. Submission is a good indication that repentance is real.

— 1 John 1:9 — Romans 6:19-23

“FORTY YEARS OF WANDERING”

Numbers 13 and 14

Biblical Principle: Obedience is critical for a healthy relationship with God.

I. God brought the Israelites who had been delivered from Egypt to the edge of Canaan, the land God had promised to them. They sent 12 spies to scout the land and report back. They brought back evidence of a land “flowing with milk and honey. It was just as God had promised. Ten of the men, however, brought back discouraging news, saying the people of Canaan were too great to defeat. These ten men caused **division and panic among the people**. The main issue was once again their lack of faith in God’s ability.

It is amazing how **bad attitudes** can affect powerfully others around us. Bad attitudes signal a deep spiritual problem. One question we must ask ourselves as believers is do I encourage or discourage others? Do I have a positive, faith based outlook that builds up the body of Christ or do I have a negative, divisive attitude that is a stumbling block to my brothers and sisters in the Lord? Faith empowers us to see the positive side of life, not the negative. The negative stems from fear and disbelief.

— Philippians 4:13 — Romans 8:37 — Matthew 19:26 — Mark 9:23

& — 1 John 5:13-15

II. Joshua and Caleb were God focused leaders. They were the ones who brought back a positive report, encouraging the people to trust God for the victory. These were men who had discernment and wisdom. They had learned how to see God in any situation. Joshua and Caleb were able to see God beyond the circumstances and believe his word.

God desires for all his children to believe his word, to trust him by faith. The more we obey his word and trust him, the more we learn to have **discernment** throughout life. When critical moments of decision arise, we know how to confront it and how to proceed in a positive, victorious fashion, instead of falling back into negative, non-believing ways. Churches need men and women, leaders and followers, who can see God as bigger than the circumstances. God rewards and blesses with such conduct.

— Hebrews 11:6 — Psalm 124:1-8 — 2 Timothy 1:7, 12 — Ephesians 3:20

III. The Israelites were punished for their lack of trust by wandering in the desert for the next forty years (one year for each day they spied out the land — Numbers 14:30-35). This was the **consequence** of their choice. We must always remember that our choices, too, have consequences. God’s grace always covers us in Christ, but many times God does not chose to take away the consequence. We must realize the seriousness of our disobedience that sin has a price.

— Galatians 6:7-9 — Psalm 119:66-68, 71-72

“JOSHUA, A LEADER EXAMPLE”

Joshua 1:1-9

Biblical Principle: Leaders are people of faith who hold to the word of God, refusing to give into fear.

I. Joshua was now taking over for Moses. He would become the leader who would take the Israelites over into the Promise Land after forty years of wandering in the desert. The Israelites were now ready after having to learn a valuable lesson of obedience to God's word. Moses had led them for over forty years and now it was time God would fulfill his promise to give them the land. Joshua had proven earlier that he had the right stuff to be a follower of God's word and a leader of God's people. He proved he had the character to match the assignment. He and Caleb were the only two of the twelve spies who went up into the land to spy out its prospects and who brought back a positive report. The other ten brought back a negative report and caused disarray in the camp. (See Numbers 13-14 and previous lesson on exploring the Promised Land).

Character is important to leadership in God's work, his people, his church. Jesus spent three years working with his apostles, preparing them for their assignment to win a world to God's truth. He taught them, challenged them and put them in positions which would refine them for the job. In addition to Jesus' example, the New Testament reminds us of the importance of character in leadership. The health of the church depends on it. As Bill Hybels says, “the church is the hope of the world, when it is done right” and good leaders are the key.

— Matthew 10 — Acts 6:1-6 — Philippians 2:19-24 — 1 Timothy 3:1-7

II. Joshua was given a daunting task of leading over two million people across into the Promise Land. God gave him counsel on how to be a successful leader in Joshua 1:6-9. Here are three important points to that success:

A. “Be strong and courageous” (v. 6) — Standing firm and continuing forward in God's plan is crucial to seeing God's work completed. The Bible is full of examples like Paul who endured hardship to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. David endured hardship to build the kingdom of Israel. Jeremiah endured great suffering to bring God's word to the Hebrew people who were going into captivity in Babylon. We have to hold firm to God's faithfulness.

— Acts 20:24 — 1 Corinthians 15:58 — 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

B. “Obedience to God's word” (v. 7) — God's word is the founding part of our strength and wisdom as leaders. We lead under God's leadership, his word. Failure is certain, if we trust in our wisdom. Trust God's word in the dark times and the good times. He will not fail us.

— 2 Timothy 3:15-17 — Colossians 3:16 — 1 Thessalonians 2:13

C. “Guard against Discouragement” (v. 9) — Keeping our eyes on God’s promises and truths guards against discouragement. Remember God always wins. Trust him. The joy of the Lord is our strength.

— Nehemiah 8:10b — Hebrews 12:2-3 — James 1:2-4 — Philippians 4:4-9

“JERICHO FALLS”

Joshua 6

Biblical Principle: Following God’s directions, his will, is essential to victory.

I. God ordered the people to march once each day for six days around the city of Jericho. On the seventh day they were to march seven times around and on the seventh time the priests would give a blast on the horn, the people were to shout, and the walls would be removed. Victory over their enemy would result.

This was certainly not the norm. God was leading them into an uncomfortable, out of their control, but in his control experience. Many times we will find ourselves in circumstances that seem strange and that do not make sense to our human understanding. As believers, we must continually remember that God knows best and that his plan is perfect. He can be trusted because what he wants for us is the very best.

— Proverbs 3:5-6 — Jeremiah 29:11

II. This whole event was not a demonstration of man’s ability, but rather a demonstration of God’s power. God wants to prove to us that he is able to meet all our needs and to take care of us in all circumstances. No obstacle is too big for him. This story is evidence that God can do all things. Paul said he is able to guard that which is most essential for us, all his promises and all his provisions. (2 Timothy 1:12; Philippians 4:19) He is especially able to guard and grant our eternity in Christ Jesus.

— 1 Peter 1:3-8 — Ephesians 6:10-11 — 2 Corinthians 1:8-10 — Matthew 19:26

III. One significant understanding about the story of the fall of Jericho is the **emphasis on God deserving the credit** and the glory for all that happened. There was no mistaking that God did it. The Israelites were only asked to trust and obey. God would do the rest.

Recognizing God’s hand and giving God the recognition for all he does is very important to our relationship with him. It requires humility on our part. Human pride wants to take

the credit or diminish God's movement and blessing. Have you come to the place to give God the proper credit for his work and blessings in your life? Do you give God the glory for his love and faithfulness? Psalm 115:1 encourages us to recognize God and exalt him to his rightful place above us. This is true worship.

— Ephesians 3:20 — Romans 11:33-36

“SAMPSON: A CASE STUDY IN SELF-DISCIPLINE”

Judges 13-16

Biblical Principle: Self-discipline is an integral part of a successful Christian life.

I. Sampson was called to be a great leader, one of the “judges,” a protective leader over the Israelite nation. (Judges 13:4-5) In addition, Sampson was set aside from birth to be a Nazirite, one who is consecrated before the Lord, given a special role within the Hebrew community as a representative of God. Nazirites were not to touch wine or cut their hair. It was a sign of devotion to God (Numbers 6:1-8).

Sampson did prove to be a great leader by defeating many of the Philistines, a people who oppressed and attacked the Israelite people. (Judges 13:1) He led Israel for twenty years. (Judges 16:31) He was not a great leader, however, when it came to character, especially in the realm of self-control. (Judges 16:1-2) Sampson had a problem with lust, and his demise happened through the seductress, Delilah, a biblical soap opera. (Judges 16:4) Sampson wasted and squandered his gifts and opportunities to be an example and help to his people. It was not until the end that he recognized his ways, and repented of his behavior. He still, however, had to face the consequences of his actions. He proved that it is better to think, before one acts.

— Romans 6:19-23 — Galatians 6:7-9 — Proverbs 25:28

II. Self-control is essential to being successful and healthy as Christ followers. The “fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22-23) reminds us of the importance of self-control as an expression of God in our life. Self-control allows us to produce healthy results for God’s kingdom and to live in peace and contentment. It also allows us to avoid many disastrous outcomes that are indicative of those who live life without self-control. We are a country that struggles in this particular area. Much of America is living in excess with no self-control. We are encouraged to live outside our means through credit card abuse and over spending. Americans have no idea what delayed gratification means. Likewise, we have Hollywood teaching our children that sex without marriage is not only permissible, but necessary for happiness. Sanctity of marriage is under attack and being redefined in sectors of society to include “same sex” marriage within the definition. In addition, personal responsibility is not valued as an important character trait within society. It’s easier to blame others for our wrong.

God wants better for his people. He does so because he loves us. He wants us free. (Galatians 5:1) Lacking self-discipline will never result in a vital, joyful life. It is the enemy of true freedom and places people in bondage. God disciplines us to teach us self-discipline and discernment. (We as parents are called to do the same for our children. Otherwise, they grow up to lack self-discipline, making it very difficult to have healthy relationships with others and have productive lives. They squander.)

— Galatians 5:16-26 — 1 Peter 5:6-11 — Hebrews 12:4-12

“SAUL, A POOR SUBSTITUTE”

1 Samuel 8 - 10

Biblical Principle: Saul, the first Israelite king, proved that no one can replace the Lord as our true leader.

I. Samuel had served as judge over Israel for many years. The Israelites, however, said they were not satisfied with God’s order and reign over Israel. Instead, they wanted a king like all the other nations. (1 Samuel 8:19-20). This was not God’s ideal plan for them. They were to be different than their neighbors. God chose them to be a “holy” people, meaning, set apart for Him. (1 Samuel 8:7)

We as Christ Followers are called to be holy as God is holy, set apart for him. (1 Peter 1:15-16) **To be holy means to be different from the world as God is different from the world.** Our commitment to be holy affords us the opportunity to be salt and light in the world as Jesus has commanded us to be. It influences those around us so they may see the light of Christ, and, perhaps, choose to be a follower as well. We have been given the **privilege** to carry the message of God’s salvation in Christ and how we live among people affects their perception of who God is. Jesus said to make disciples.

— Matthew 28:19-20 — Matthew 5:13-16 — Romans 10:9-10

II. Saul was selected to be the first king over Israel. Although it was not God’s ideal to have a king over Israel, He gave into the people’s wishes and anointed Saul to rule. Saul was given a tremendous responsibility and privilege to reign over the people. He was instructed that his power would come from God and not himself. (1 Samuel 10:1, 6) To do things in his own strength would prove feeble.

We, too, have been given the Holy Spirit to empower us to carry out the great commission of Christ. Every believer has been given this special privilege of having God’s Holy Spirit live inside them. Furthermore, our living and our accomplishments come from the Spirit of God who enables us to live holy and to make a difference for the Kingdom of God. We must learn to walk or live in the Spirit and not in our strength. There is joy and power when we learn to trust in God’s ability and not our own.

— Acts 1:8 — Romans 8:9-16 — Ephesians 1:13-14 — Zechariah 4:6

III. Sadly, Saul proved to be a very ineffective king, just as God had warned. He had a strong beginning, but a poor finish. (1 Samuel 13:13-14; 1 Samuel 15:1-29) He became a violent and out of control man who wreaked havoc on the kingdom until David took the throne. (read chapters 18-31) Saul is an example to all of us of the importance of having not only a strong start, but a strong finish. It is too easy many times to give up in the middle of the journey and take the easy route of self-centeredness. Many Christians have ruined their testimony by not finishing the race. Remember, it is worth all that we are to serve honorably down to the end.

— 1 Timothy 6:12-16 — 2 Timothy 4:6-8 — Hebrews 12:2-3 — Galatians 6:9

“DAVID AND THE GIANT”

1 Samuel 17

Biblical Principle: God can defeat any giant (problem) in our life through faith.

I. Israel was at war with a people called the Philistines. There was one particular Philistine warrior called Goliath who reigned terror over any who would dare attack him. All the men in Israel were afraid to confront him. His size and abilities paralyzed any in his path. (Goliath's statistics: nine feet tall; armor weighing 125 lbs.; the head of his spear alone weighed 15 lbs.). He was an obstacle that stood between Israel and victory. We many times face problems that seem so overwhelming and so big that there appears to be no solution or end to it. It paralyzes us with fear and hinders us from living freely and with confidence. Our issues may stem from past failures or present setbacks. It may be family or a boss or economical or a health issue. Problems come in all sizes and shapes. Unfortunately, many use the wrong means to cope with their strongholds. False substitutes like alcohol, drugs (illegal and abuse of prescription drugs), rage, violence, and sexual immorality become common ways of attempting to avoid the issues. These only lead to defeat and empty results.

Jesus came to carry our burdens and solve our issues. He came to heal and deliver us. He is the true solution to all our needs.

— Philippians 4:11-13 — Hebrews 13:5b — Romans 8:37

II. David was a young man (probably late teens — 1 Samuel 17:33) who had heard of their dilemma and was willing to step in and face the giant. He was an unlikely candidate and no one felt confident in his abilities. Goliath even felt he was being made sport of by sending out such an unimpressive warrior. It wasn't long; however, until David proved that, through God's power, all things are possible. The difference between David and the other Israelite soldiers was that the soldiers could only see how big the giant was, but David could only see how big God was. How big is God to you? God uses the unimpressive to demonstrate to the world his power. He chooses those of no notoriety to shame the elite. He chose a shepherd boy to defeat a giant, a young teen age girl, named Mary, to carry the Messiah, an eighty year old senior citizen, named Moses, to deliver his people out of Egypt. He chose a fisherman, Peter, to lead the early church, and a prejudicial lawyer, Paul, to reach the very people Paul once despised, but now loved in Christ. God can use anyone who is willing to surrender to him. Jesus said “I tell you the truth, if we have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” (Matthew 17:20). Trust in the Lord goes a long way.

— Acts 4:13 — 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; 2:1-5 — Zechariah 4:6