

Giants of the Faith From Giant Killer to Fugitive Lean On Me: Part 5

July 24, 2022

Rev. Dr. Tony Soldano

SERMON DESCRIPTION

Hard times require more faith than when things are all going your way. This is when you need to truly lean on God, trust in Him and have faith. You require as much faith, if not more, in the valley than you will on the mountain top.

SERMON QUESTIONS & OBJECTIVES

1. What do they need to know?
 - You need just as much faith in the valley as you do on the mountain tops and when you are killing giants.
2. Why do they need to know it?
 - Discouragement can overcome you, but faith sustains you.
3. How should we apply it?
 - Trust in God with all your heart. He will see you through.

OPENING LINE

Does anyone remember the song, "Lean on me"? It is not a Christian song but maybe it should be. It is a Christian song when I sing it (lol).

Song: Lean on Me ~by *Bill Withers*

"Lean on me
When you're not strong
And I'll be your friend
I'll help you carry on..."

INTRODUCTION OF THE SERMON

From giant killer to fugitive, David finds himself on the run. At one point he literally says that he is one step away from death. The sure and confident young man that killed Goliath is now uncertain of his life and future.

One by one, David's support systems are seemingly kicked out from under him as a jealous and bloodthirsty King Saul chases him throughout the countryside to destroy him. David finds himself alone and with no one to lean on except for his faith in God.

Some of the therapeutic aspects of David's life were worship, prayer, and writing. He found solace in pouring out his soul mostly in Psalms and lyrics.

TRANSITION STATEMENT

You will require as much faith in the valley as you do in killing giants, maybe more!

MAIN PASSAGE

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Hebrews 11:32-34

³² And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Psalms 27:1-14

¹ The Lord *is* my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord *is* the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? ² When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. ³ Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war may rise against me, in this I *will be* confident. ⁴ One *thing* I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple. ⁵ For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

⁶ And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord. ⁷ Hear, Lord, *when* I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me. ⁸ *When You said*, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "Your face, Lord, I will seek." ⁹ Do not hide Your face from me; do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation.

¹⁰ When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me. ¹¹ Teach me Your way, O Lord, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies. ¹² Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. ¹³ *I would have lost heart*, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!

MAIN POINTS

What is the fundamental root of faith? What must we believe to line up with scripture?

1. All of creation, visible and invisible, has been created by God Himself, the creator, and it is not a product of chance or evolution.
2. Historical figures, such as those named in Hebrews 11, have encountered God the creator and have known Him to be a personal God who is involved in the affairs of individuals.
3. Anyone that approaches God must approach Him with a heart of faith and must believe in points one and two above and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
4. God is sovereign, omniscient, omni-present, Almighty, and ruler of all things.

THE FIVE CRUTCHES/SUPPORTS THAT WERE REMOVED FROM DAVID'S LIFE

After the success of destroying Goliath, David is employed in King Saul's army and no longer returns to his father's house to watch over the sheep. He becomes a highly decorated commander and a national figure. When he returns from battle after battle, the people sing his praises in the streets. The insecure king then become vindictive and subsequently begins to persecute David. The national hero quickly falls from national hero to fugitive. In some ways, he is that unknown shepherd in the wilderness that no one desires. One by one, key support mechanisms are taken away from David as he is forged in the valley of despair, his only refuge is to turn to God. Could this have been the key to the Lord calling David a man after His own heart?

Five Rocks/Five Crutches

It is interesting to note, that the once confident and secure young man who defeated Goliath became a fugitive running for his life, and then, in his own words, one step away from death. David took five rocks from the brook to defeat Goliath. Five crutches or support mechanisms were taken from him as he journeyed through the valley of the shadow of death:

1. **His position** in the army – his status and renown from Saul's army
2. **His wife** – companionship and intimacy
3. **Samuel the prophet** – direction and insight, spiritual father
4. **Jonathan** – David's best friend, love, and strength
5. **His self-respect** – dignity and pride, he had to go to Gath and act like a mad man in order not to be killed by the Philistines.

WHEN WE LEAN ON GOD

1. Our fears are displaced

Psalms 27:1-3

¹The Lord *is* my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord *is* the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? ²When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. ³Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war may rise against me, in this I *will be* confident.

- a. ***When we are experiencing foreign emotions such as weakness, fear, failure, etc., our trust and faith in God, and his character and ability, will deliver us from all our fears.***
- b. The once immovable David is now standing on shaky ground, perhaps experiencing foreign emotions such as weakness, uncertainty, and fear.
- c. David is clearly expressing that the odds are against him and that they are overwhelming, but he declares that even if it becomes worse his focus will not be on circumstances but on God Himself.
- d. Rather than yield to these debilitating feelings, David begins to look to God.

- e. David's fears are displaced, by **light, salvation, and strength**
- **God is our light:** It is the Lord that lights our path, gives us revelation, and helps us walk through the dark seasons of life
 - **God is our salvation:** God is the One that rescues; we do not rescue ourselves, He is our deliverance, the One that has the power to set us free
 - **God is our strength:** David is expressing that God is his power, his inner fortitude, and determination, his reason to carry on although weakness may be prevailing, God is always the underlying foundation of our lives.

2. Our focus is renewed

Psalms 27:4-6

⁴One *thing* I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple. ⁵For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. ⁶And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.

- a. ***David's faith once again looks to God, his trust, his need, and dependence for God are renewed. David has a choice: either to look at his circumstances or look to God.***
- b. As David experiences the loneliness of being a fugitive, he recognizes that his solace must be found in the Lord
- c. His faith is strengthened by his deep conviction to see God and to seek his face
- This is a reference to being in a relationship with God
 - To be a friend of God
 - To communicate with God
- d. God will hide you in plain sight
- David makes many references to God hiding him, meaning that the Lord's protection is upon him while he is a fugitive and, on the run
 - The Lord hides us from our enemies, our detractors and those that would do us harm.
- e. David expresses his faith in God's ultimate victory in his life
- He expresses his confidence in God
 - He sings the Lord's praises
 - He shares his own soul, but he will see victory over his detractors
 - David is rooted and grounded in God's ability and ultimate victory.

3. Our patience is rewarded

Psalms 27:12-14

¹²Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. ¹³*I would have lost heart*, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. ¹⁴Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!

- a. ***By nature, human beings do not like to wait, we would rather have things "now". However, they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, and they shall see the goodness of God in the land of the living. There is a blessedness in waiting, and a curse in haste.***

- b. David declares that there is a great promise and blessing in waiting on God. The Lord's timing may not always be our timing, but His schedule is best.
- c. Waiting on the Lord is an act of faith.
- d. The prescription to losing heart is faith. David declares his faith in the Lord – he would have been lost and despaired unless he had believed in the goodness of God.
- e. As followers of Christ, we are commanded to be of good courage as we wait on God and activate our faith.
- f. The idea of **waiting on God** conveys the message of trust and faith in His ultimate arrival and outcome and that we will not take matters into our own hands, but rather:
 - Seek Him
 - Serve Him
 - Watch for Him.

QUOTES & STICKY STATEMENTS

The antidote to despair is faith.

God has the ability to hide you in plain sight.

There is blessedness in waiting, and a curse in haste.

Don't lose heart, believe!

God will never create a life for you that is not dependent on Him.

Waiting on the Lord is an act of faith.

The more Saul pursued David; the more David pursued God.

God can hide you in plain sight.

There is a blessedness in being hidden.

The valley can reveal the things we were leaning on that were not God.

Our deepest faith can come from being in the valley.

David lost all that he had in order that he would lean on God.

It's more important that the Lord knows you, than you know Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does David find strength in writing? How is this therapeutical to him?
2. Read Psalms 7, 27, 31, 34, 52. What is the thread of David's message?
3. Describe what David would have experienced in going from national hero to fugitive and unknown.
4. How did God develop David's faith in the valley?
5. In Psalm 27, David expresses certain keys to his confidence in God. Look at verses one through three and begin to unpack this concept. What does it look like in reality?
6. Is it possible to be in faith and yet experience emotions such as weakness, failure, and even fear? Is this not a contradictory statement?
7. Why did God allow King Saul to stay in power for so long? Why was he given permission to do so many evil things?