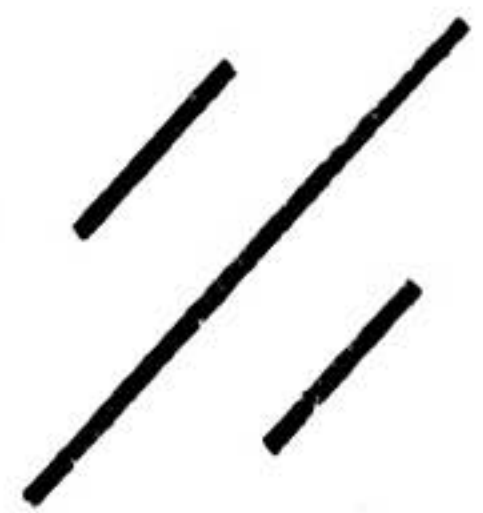


SESSION ONE

Dead but Still Deadly

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

1 PETER 5:8-9



Orientation

When Louie was a college student, he worked summers at a church camp on a rustic, jungle-esque island off the coast of South Carolina. One of his jobs was to deal with the poisonous snakes and ensure they didn't become too much of a problem on the path to the bathhouse. Louie and some of the camp counselors would wallop a snake on the head with a baseball bat until it was dead. Then they'd hold the head down with the bat and pull on the snake's body until the head popped off. Finally, they'd grind the head down into the sand and bury it with more sand.

Why bury the head? Because even though the snake was dead, there was still enough venom in its fangs to poison anyone who happened to walk by and step on them. The snake's head was *dead but still deadly*.

That's a good picture of our enemy, Satan. Jesus defeated him on the cross. The battle is over, the victory won. Because of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection Satan is nothing but a beaten snake with his head torn off. And yet, if we step unwarily on his dead head, those spring-loaded fangs can cause grave harm. If we listen to him or give in to his schemes, we'll get a jab of his crippling venom. It will poison the robust life we are meant to have in Christ.

This week in *Goliath Must Fall*, we'll see this double truth in action. We will explore how on the one hand, Jesus defeated Satan dead on the cross; but on the other hand, that dead serpent's head still has venom. It can still cause serious damage and destruction in our lives.

Pretty much all of us have an area in our lives where Satan threatens to rob our joy and steamroll our capacity to love others. It might be fear, rejection, anger, addiction, or even comfort. We need to know that in Christ, the enemy is dead. We also need Jesus' help to stop stepping on those poison-filled fangs. We need both. In the course of this series, you will discover how to walk in the

victory that Jesus has won and keep from falling prey to the giants that rise up to oppose us. We'll discover that we're called to live from that victory, not for it.

When we look at the account of David and Goliath, we often assume that we are David in the story. We think that if we can just muster enough courage and willpower, we can overcome the enemy through our own efforts. But the truth is that Jesus represents David in this story, and we can only truly overcome the enemy when we rely on his strength, not our own.

Isn't that a huge relief?

Welcome and Checking In

Welcome to the first session of *Goliath Must Fall*. If you or any of your fellow group members do not know one another, take a few minutes to introduce yourselves. Then, to get things started, discuss one of the following questions:

- *How have you changed in the past five years?*

or

- *How would you like to change in the next five years?*

Hearing the Word

Read aloud in the group the following passage from 1 Samuel 17:1–9. This is a familiar story, so as you read listen for any fresh insights and write them down to share with the group.

¹ Now the Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Sokoh and Azekah. ² Saul and the

Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines.³ The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them.

⁴ A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span.⁵ He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels;⁶ on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back.⁷ His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him.

⁸ Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me.⁹ If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us."

In groups of two or three, share your answers to the following questions:

What was one thing that stood out to you from the Scripture, and why?

How easy is it for you to think of yourself as David in this story, going up against the Goliath in your life? Why did you answer the way you did?

What do you think we are meant to learn from this story?

Watch the Video

Play the video segment for session one. Use the following outline to record any thoughts or concepts that stand out to you.

Notes

It's not God's will for us to have "giants" in our lives that are demoralizing us and stealing God's glory from us.

Our enemy is like a snake without a head—dead but still deadly. He has been defeated at the cross, but there is still poison in his fangs.

Just as in David's day, the enemy will send giants against us to torment us and make us miserable. We can't allow those giants to have power in our lives.

We often view David and Goliath as the classic underdog story. The message we often take away from the story is that if we try hard enough, we can overcome any giant.

But we are not “David” in the story. We can’t bring our giants down by trying harder. *Jesus* represents David, and he is the one who does the work in bringing Goliath down.

When Jesus sets us free, we are free indeed (see John 8:36).

David wasn’t motivated simply by his own personal freedom. He was motivated to defeat Goliath so he could bring glory and fame to God.

If there is a giant with its foot on our neck, God is not getting the glory in our lives. This is why any Goliath that comes against us *must fall*.

Group Discussion

Take a few minutes with your group members to discuss what you just watched and explore these concepts in Scripture.

1. What do you think is meant by living *from* victory as opposed to living *for* it? How might that play out in your life?

2. How do you respond to the notion that Jesus, not you, is the David who has defeated the giant in your life? What are the implications of this for the way you live your life?
3. Jesus has been given “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18). The reason Jesus came to earth was to crush the power of sin and death. What difference does this make as to how you view the giant in your life?
4. If Jesus has all authority and has defeated the enemy, and if he wants us to have life to the full, why do you suppose he lets the problems in our lives still have the venom to harm us? How does God’s glory figure into the situation?
5. How do you go about drawing close to Jesus so that you won’t step on the venomous head of a dead snake?
6. Our ultimate defense against the enemy is leaning into the all-sufficiency of Christ. What does his all-sufficiency mean? How can we lean into it?