

SESSION FOUR

Comfort Must Fall

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it."

MARK 8:34-35



Welcome and Checking In

Go around the group and invite everyone to answer one of the following questions:

- *When was a time that you had to put aside personal comfort in order to do something that God had for you to do?*

or

- *If money, time, and influence were no barriers, what would you like to see God do through you?*

Last week you were invited to participate in the “Between Sessions” section of the study.

- Did you do one of the activities? If so, which one? If not, why not?
- What are some of the things you wrote down in reflection?
- What did you learn by engaging in these activities?

Hearing the Word

Read aloud in the group the following passage from 1 Samuel 17:17-25. As before, listen for any fresh insights as this portion of the David and Goliath story is read.

¹⁷ Now Jesse said to his son David, “Take this ephah of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread for your brothers and hurry to their camp. ¹⁸ Take along these ten cheeses to the commander of their unit. See how your brothers are and bring back some assurance from them. ¹⁹ They are with

Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines.”

²⁰ Early in the morning David left the flock in the care of a shepherd, loaded up and set out, as Jesse had directed. He reached the camp as the army was going out to its battle positions, shouting the war cry. ²¹ Israel and the Philistines were drawing up their lines facing each other. ²² David left his things with the keeper of supplies, ran to the battle lines and asked his brothers how they were. ²³ As he was talking with them, Goliath, the Philistine champion from Gath, stepped out from his lines and shouted his usual defiance, and David heard it. ²⁴ Whenever the Israelites saw the man, they all fled from him in great fear.

²⁵ Now the Israelites had been saying, “Do you see how this man keeps coming out? He comes out to defy Israel. The king will give great wealth to the man who kills him. He will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from taxes in Israel.”

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?

What was the Israelites' situation in the Valley of Elah?

How do you think this might have led to their complacency in facing Goliath?

Watch the Video

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

Notes

The Christian life is not a spectator sport. It's not about sitting in a comfortable church celebrating a Savior who led an uncomfortable life.

Jesus did not come to live an easy life and retire in luxury. He came to fulfill a purpose, and he calls us to fulfill the mission that he gave to us.

David accomplished in forty minutes what the entire Israelite army couldn't accomplish in forty days. The men were not motivated to go into battle because they had tents, food, and supplies—in a word, they were *comfortable*.

Our faith thrives in discomfort. No one in Scripture who played a significant role in God's plan ever did so by choosing the easy route, living in ease, or refusing to take a risk.

The cross—the supreme example of difficulty and suffering—is where the gospel is unpacked in all its power. God chose the difficult path of sending his Son to die on our behalf.

Faith flourishes in hostile territory because it is countercultural. God moves among his people when they are willing to step out of their comfort zone and pursue his plans.

It is in the soil of discomfort that the seeds of the gospel most often flourish.

We sign up to be partners with God when we choose to be where Jesus is—and go wherever that leads us. As we do, the layers of comfort fade away, and the giant of comfort falls.

Group Discussion

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

1. Why is comfort a dangerous giant? How can it affect us for the worse?
2. On a scale of 0 to 5, how important is comfort to you? Why did you answer the way you did? How does your desire for comfort play itself out in your daily life?
3. Can you see any areas in which your desire for comfort is limiting what you might do for God? If so, what are those areas?
4. The point of our lives is the fame of Jesus. How can our lives proclaim the fame of Jesus?

5. "Life is short. God is big." How would you explain each of those statements in your own words? Why are they important to remember together?

6. What might it look like for you to get out of your comfort zone in order to serve God in some way? How do you feel about that?

Living from Victory

For this activity, the leader will need something to write on that the whole group can see: a flip chart, a sheet of butcher paper taped to the wall, or a whiteboard. The leader will also need a marker to write with.

As a group, take some time to brainstorm a list of attributes that Jesus and David had that are the opposite of comfort seeking. For example: *passionate, bold, generous, selfless, initiative, purpose-driven, and missional*. The leader will write these attributes on the whiteboard, butcher paper, or flip chart.

Next, the leader will ask everyone in the group to complete one of these sentences:

If I were _____ like Jesus,
then I would _____.

If I were _____ like Jesus,
then I wouldn't have to _____.