

## **CCL. 9.02.20      Conquering Giants 2**

It was a David and Goliath battle.

Taken from a story in the Bible – we looked at it last week, the story of David and Goliath. Small shepherd boy fights and beats a huge warrior giant.

Inspiring stories of how we should all be taking on big powers. Films that help you achieve your goals. Motivational talks at church.

Harsh. Because most of us so far from taking on government, challenge to just live what we might call a normal life.

One of the ways we experience struggle to live even just normal life, one of the things that is a giant to us, is struggling with anxiety. May not know because lots of people don't talk about it, real thing that many people struggle with. For some it's simply persistent worries about the future making them feel cast down, for many others it's an anxiety disorder, panic attacks or OCD.

Feeling that today, say one thing first. I am not, and the Bible is not going to tell you to be brave David and face your giant Goliath.

The Bible says Jesus is the shepherd king who has killed the giant for us. Giants we face are sin, pressure of a world that hates God, Satan who is God's enemy. Jesus has already beaten that giant – see today that his victory offers real help for those of us struggling with anxiety.

### **Reading: 1 Samuel 17: 31-50**

So many interesting bits of that story – small example of Bible's big story: the shepherd king removes the power of evil terrible enemy of God's people.

Not me facing Goliath – Jesus facing sin, the world, the devil.

Point out one insight this story gives us.

People of Israel who have been told that God is with them. Created situation by insisting on choosing a poor king. Then not trusted God to help them when he had promised to. There they are, anxious, scared terrified.

David, come on. God has set you up to win this. Admit your mistake and ask for help. Will no one just take on God's enemy.

Not in the story at all. Burning passion for God's glory, to see God's glory recognised. But he is not at all irritated,

disappointed, angry with the people, even though he could have been.

“Let no lose heart because of this Philistine”

Care. His wants God to be glorified, God's enemy to be defeated, but his attitude to the failing people is not – to show what they should and could have done. The shepherd king says I want them to be strengthened, helped, heartened. Snapping in anger at the weak people.

Only taking on this battle because of his love and care for them, wanting their emotional state to be improved. Fights the battle so that their anxiety can be lifted.

Bible says this about Jesus:

“A bruised reed he will not break.”

Just as David could have said to Israelites – come on, you are God's people, fight his enemies, he didn't. Saw that they were bruised weak reeds and said, I will do something that strengthens and helps them, so Jesus with us.

Years I spent worrying that Jesus wouldn't really want me on his team, because all the Christians I knew were either super holy looking or super cool. (Cooler than me)

Not how shepherd kings speak of their people, I'll do it because you won't, they say, I've fought so you don't have to lose heart. Jesus says, I take on death, death on the cross, I come back to life not unwillingly because of your failure but so, right now, today, you can take heart against all the giants little helpers, all the things he uses to try and stop you.

How that might be true when your worry and anxiety is making you lose heart.

### **Satan's defeat: Don't be anxious about anxiety**

One of the worst things about feeling anxious is how is the spiral of anxiety. Feel worried, limits me, unable to do things I think I should do. All the things I should have done, add to things I have to worry about. Entirely debilitating.

Frankie Bridge.

Worse, then end up falling back on patterns that are bad for me and other people because just need to feel better. Snap at husband or wife, impatient to children, use porn, drink too much. Lazy, always trying to get out of any commitment to anything, thought of having commitment to things makes me anxious. Maybe even

for some listening on the podcast just stop attending church feel bad at not being able to do what others do.

Hear the verse in the Bible where Jesus says "Do not worry." Another thing to add to the list of things I'm failing at, another something that pushes me into the spiral.

Bible does say don't worry. Being horrible to people, using porn or drugs, not doing the things you are responsible for, giving up in your church family, those things are wrong.

Texts of the Bible to prove that to you.

Big story of the Bible, main thing the Bible is about, thing God wants us to know again and again and again is not really about what's right and wrong, but the truth, told in hundreds different ways that the shepherd king kills the giant. Yes, the Bible says, you are wrong. Get it wrong. A lot. Anxious likely to land on that straight away. Small sidebar to the main thing: The Shepherd King has killed the Giant.

He forgave us all our sins, <sup>14</sup> having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross

Imagine the command that you are feeling condemned for not following. Perhaps it is the command, the law not to worry. Something else you know you have done because stress of feeling anxious is so present. Something you know you really should do but anxiety is stopping you. Loving your neighbour is too hard. Failing at it is crushing. Like it's written on a list, failure list that leaves you panicked and sad.

For Christians are command not supposed to work as accusations.

Trusted Jesus to put you right with God, this is what the Bible says about you.

Forgave us all of our sins. Doing these things is wrong, but Jesus death on the cross means they are forgiven. Feeling accused and cast down and messed up by the things we do wrong, remembering and regretting laws you have broken and how you have messed you up. God is not remembering that. God condemning you – God says those things are forgiven.

Further, he took the laws we have failed to follow, list we make of our failures. Legal indebtedness, really are things we did wrong. True you have broken those laws, they are a real list.

He took that and nailed them to the cross. Taken it away. Anything that sits in that column that says "you are condemned because of this" "you are useless because of this" nailed to the cross with him, cancelled. All the punishment that's due to me for all my lawbreaking, is taken away by him.

Voice, a voice that says, Bible says don't worry, you are defeated because you are anxious, avoid church you will be made to feel bad there because you are wrong and a sinner. Jesus doesn't want you on his team. Anxious, you stayed at home all day, how rubbish are you?

Whose voice is that?

Not the voice of the Shepherd King; he says "don't let them lose heart" and "a bruised reed I will not break" "I know you are wrong, I died to take punishment for that, I say all of your sins, even those are forgive. Accusing voice is not Jesus' voice it's the voice of the giant. Spiritual enemy Satan. Here's the list of all your failures.

Jesus says legal indebtedness, that list of ways you have broken God's law is nailed to the cross.

Satan is the great accuser, he wants to stop you doing what's right by telling you you have broken the law. It's him saying – the Bible says don't worry, you are anxious, therefore you are useless. Avoid Christians. Stop trying to serve God. Make yourself feel better by sinning more.

Jesus has made a public spectacle of Satan when he died and took the punishment for your law breaking. Laugh. Laugh at the accuser holding up the list of ways you have broken the law. He cannot accuse you squash you, push you down in this cycle by telling you about your failures. Cancelled by Jesus.

At least, he can't unless you let him.

Jesus does say the words "do not worry." He does not say them so you can put yourself under condemnation he died to free you from. He fought the accusing Satan by dying for your lawbreaking, taking away the written code from standing over you like that, so it's possible not to worry.

Counts for any sin.

Why mention this now? Struggling with anxiety, or depression, and in this spiral. People getting it wrong,

atmosphere getting it wrong, remember David in the story, he is not angry with the Israelites for not facing the giant, he says, don't lose heart because I fight the giant for you.

Comes into focus when Jesus never says words about how we should live to condemn us but says I died in your place to remove the all the charges that laws hold against you.

On this spiral because you think there is a performance to be done, you are failing. You would be failing if there was a performance. Jesus already defeated the giant who was accusing you by dying for your sins. His wish for you is to be heartened by his work for you. Any voice condemning you is not his voice.

Talk about how knowing Jesus victory can help you tackle anxiety. Do that, be clear no one can condemn you for feeling anxious. It may be that you are anxious in some wrong way – choosing not to trust in God. Not be that. Doesn't matter - Jesus offers way through it not because he is threatening to punish you but because he looks on us and says I don't want any of my precious children losing heart when I have already fought the giant.

### **The world's defeat: We can battle worry about what others think**

Hymnwriter William Cowper

"Those whose spirits are formed like mine, to whom a public exhibition of themselves on any occasion is mortal poison may have some idea of the horror I feel...others can have none."

If he had lived today I'm pretty sure we would have called that a social anxiety disorder. Extreme form of what is going on with many of us when we are worried – we are wondering what other people will think.

Big decisions "keeping up with the Joneses" or small decisions "I just can't face going to that place where I will have to talk to people"

Sympathy and self esteem. Sorry it is so hard, can I try and show you ways that other people will think nice things about you.

Going to name what is wrong with living that way. Name it in the context of what I have just said about – none of what is wrong about us can be used against us if we trust Jesus – his heart is for us not to lose heart. Make progress, need to name the problem. I, like William Cowper, cannot some idea of the horror. True.

Selfish way to live. Constantly worried about what other people think of you, controls your responses, then thinking about yourself. Other people feature in your life as people who can serve you. I can't talk to this person, enter that situation because of what people think of me; limiting what you can for others based on what they can do for you.

Jesus defeat of the world can help us battle this worry.

**"Galatians 6:14"** - the cross of Christ brings this victory over the world.

I have been crucified to the world. Basically saying, the moment that you become a Christian, you are saying – there is nothing in me that can save myself, I needed Jesus to do it for me.

Public thing – why getting baptised such a central part of the process of becoming a Christian – publically proclaim to the world, church, anyone who could listen, I am far too bad to save myself, I needed Jesus to do it for me.

Paul says, I have already been crucified to the world – moment I say I am a Christian, explain what the Gospel is, I am saying the world, I am a failure. I failed so badly, I needed Jesus to save me.

Of course, for the Christian that's a happy admission, admit it, find Jesus has cancelled the charge that was against us. Being a Christian means admitting to the world, to the church, yourself, bad. In fact, it means that whatever the worst thing people can imagine about you is, probably worse that's hidden that Jesus looked on and said "I'm going to fight this giant".

Communion – together. For Christians. Public event, admitting you need Jesus provision for you, his body and his blood.

Given that, what are you worried about people thinking about you? Not going to find out or think anything you haven't already admitted. I have been crucified to the world, moment I said my hope isn't in myself it is in Jesus.

The world is crucified to me – whatever it is I am hoping to get from people's opinions, scramble to look the best, be the most admired, show I am worthy –scramble is over, all of those things I have from Jesus. I have the shepherd king, Lord of heaven, one who sits on throne, who all of history points to, sings over us with delight, gave his own self for us, he says "I am willing to fight the giant for you so that you don't lose heart."

The world is crucified to me – the system that means I have to be looking for other people's approval, dead to me now. I have all the approval, all the approval God the Father puts onto his son Jesus on my life now.

I am crucified to the world, because my plea, my life is all about saying I am a loved failure. I don't want to keep that hidden, want you to know, means I can point to Jesus.

Say, I got it wrong. It is my fault. I don't excuse it and I am sorry. People may take advantage of you, chance to show grace of Jesus is great.

Get that, people move from threats, who I have to stay away from because they might not bolster my self esteem, to people who I can introduce Jesus to. Even as they discover the worst about me, doing them a great service pointing them to Jesus.

Make it sound so easy. Not. Disciplines which may help us live that way. Sinful, broken nature, pushing us back into wrong ways of thinking.

Jesus has killed the giant, by being crucified he has brought in a new world order where it genuinely doesn't matter what other people think of you, pushed around, hard pressed, anxious and overwhelmed by that, he looks down saying – I have fought the giant, the giant of your sin and the world's wrong systems so you won't lose heart in this struggle.

### **What helps?**

No one needs to be in the cycle of anxiety and condemnation because Jesus has fought the accuser the devil. No one needs to worry constantly about what others think of them Jesus has defeated the world.

Live in the world all the time where systems are still the giant's systems. People do judge you, say ad things about you, bad things do happen. More next week about fighting evil. Gospel and mental health.

If we know our Saviour

Do what it takes to enjoy the victory. One hour per week is not enough. Counselling.

Turn concerns into prayers. Heart of the Saviour is for you.

Persist – hate starting new shoes. Bone in my foot.

Worship, know, pray in to the truth of the Shepherd King.