

Real Battles

Seven Realities of HBF

- 1. Real People***
- 2. Real Christians***
- 3. Real Relationships***
- 4. Real Ministers***
- 5. Real Battles***
- 6. Real Leaders***
- 7. Real War Zones***

On a recent trip to India and Nepal I had the privilege of preaching in Pastor Karl Silva's church in the city of Mumbai. As I was preparing for my Sunday morning sermon I was struck by the overwhelming odds the believers in Mumbai face as they are in the midst of a massive melting pot of 17 million plus. As they proclaim the name of Christ, they are tiny subfraction of the population and influence in this massive city of our planet.

Like every believer one of my favorite passages of scripture is found in 1 Samuel 17. The Story of young David standing against the armies of the philistines and Goliath inspires me no matter how many times I read it.

As I absorbed the enormity of the task our brothers are facing in Mumbai I really had a sense of how the soldiers facing the Philistines must have felt. After all Jesus blood has been shed for the people of Mumbai rather they believe it or not. Therefore the burden falls to those who are willing and ready to engage the enemy with a shout of victory and confidence that Christ has overcome the grave.

The congregation in Mumbai was not daunted by their circumstances. In fact the very day I was to preach they were sending relief in the form of clothing to the suffering saints in the state of Orissa on the other side of the country of India. The pastor, whom our team instantly became fast friends with, himself had been touched by the religious persecution in Orissa, but was fearlessly heading back to work on the "great plans God has for Orissa." His faith was a sight to behold.

As I prayed about what it could be that I could possibly offer these believers God led me to the familiar story of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17. Though the passage was familiar the Lord shared a tremendous truth I had yet to see in the many times I had read, studied and even preached from this passage. Keep reading and I will share it with you as we conclude this article.

My visit to India and Nepal reminded me once again of the importance of being engaged in real battles. I believe one of the most demoralizing things that happens to Christians is that we become too removed from the fray of spiritual warfare. Instead of engaging the battle we, like the army of Israel facing the Philistines are caught in a paralysis of analysis. We often find ourselves admiring the enormity and verosity of the enemies attack while maintaining a static position hoping we don't lose the battles God has already said He has won.

Real ministers are drawn to real battles. You can see this truth over and over in the scripture. From Abraham, Joshua and Caleb, David, Elijah, and the apostles of the

New Testament those who have been delivered tend to find themselves in places where people need to be delivered. It is my prayer that HBF will never lose sight of our need to be engaged in real battles. There are so many good things that can occupy the believers time, but the battle for souls, whether they be in your home, community or countries around the world is the work that God has called us to engage in.

The fifth reality of HBF is simple: **Real ministers are drawn to real battles.**

Real ministers **care for casualties**. They don't want to leave anyone behind in this sin wrecked world. While we cannot make anyone receive the love of Christ we certainly can let them know there is an escape from the ties that bind them to death and hell. This leads me to a simple truth that I had missed in my many times through 1 Samuel 17. You see David was confident to deliver others because he understood that God had delivered him from the jaws of death.

Real Ministers Are Drawn

To Real Battles

- 1. Care For Casualties**
- 2. Prepare For Adversity**
- 3. Share The Victory**

1 Samuel 17:34-35

*And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: 35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and **delivered it** out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.*

Young David was a shepherd who cared about the sheep. He didn't want any of his flock to become a casualty of lions or bears under his watch. Real ministers care about the sheep of God's fold. It is was David's experience in facing the adversity of shepherding that prepared him for the battles that he would one day face against Goliath.

While we know David had a lot of things going for him, like being annointed king, that was not what moved him. He was moved by the mission of God. God had made a promise to the nation of Israel that had yet to be fulfilled. They were living on the battle field! They had yet to fully claim the promises delivered them in generations past. The land was already thiers, they simply had not mustered the courage to posses it!

There is something about being delivered which causes a minister of the gospel to go forward in boldness to deliver others. Young David was not only a deliverer of sheep but he recongnized the God had delivered him from danger in the process.

1 Samuel 17:37

*David said moreover, The LORD that **delivered me** out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he **will deliver me** out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.*

Oh how true! The Lord has delivered us and he will deliver us. It is in that truth that real ministers **prepare for adversity**. Ephesians six is not window dressing it is a call to arms that motivates and mobilizes believers to prepare to stand just as David did in the mist of the battle field regardless of the odds. The worst thing that could happen is death, and is that really so bad? It is one thing to talk about trusting God and another to demonstrate it.

One month after returning from Mumbai we saw in the news that a terrorist attack had been executed in Mumbai. My immediate concern was for Doug Pearson our American contact on the ground in India and Nepal and the churches we had made friends with in Mumbai. Several days after the attacks I received a phone call from Doug Pearson letting me know that the Lord had removed him from the chaos of Mumbai just hours before the attacks as he was ministering in another state just north of the one Mumbai is located in. He was thankful he had lost no time in ministering the gospel and was looking forward to returning to Mumbai so they could take advantage of the uncertainty and Christmas season to preach the gospel! What an encouragement! Doug is a real minister in a real battle for souls in what could be considered overwhelming circumstances.

There is a really valuable lesson in the story of 1 Samuel 17 that real minister must not miss. You see David's faith was contagious! His willingness to face the giant and claim the victory caused the armies of God to route the Philistines because they instantly remembered who it was who delivered them! It was obviously not David who delivered the Israelites, it was God!

Real ministers share the victory because we understand that we didn't earn it! The victory we find in Christ has been delivered to us and because of that we endure difficulty to see others delivered in the same fashion. It is an awesome thing to serve the living God. There is not a better time in history to be a real minister serving a real God and engaging in real battles that impact eternity.