

How to Courageously Win Battles (The Tale of Two Swords) 1 Samuel 14:1-23

Introduction:

1. The apostle Paul knew that, as believers, we are in a spiritual battle here on earth, and that we have an enemy. Ephesians 6:10-11
2. He also knew there is no place for fear. 2 Timothy 1:7-8
3. Here in our text, the situation for God's people, Israel, was dire.
4. King Saul and 600 of his warriors were in Gibeah, and were surrounded by their enemy.
5. Not only this, the Philistines had eliminated all the blacksmiths in Israel, so Israel had no way to make weapons (13:19). They were left with two swords: King Saul's, and that of his son, Jonathan. 13:22
6. Let's fast-forward to chapter 14, and let me show you how this story ends (14:23). How did this incredible victory take place? It was initiated by the courage and valor of one man. Not King Saul, but his son, Jonathan.
7. Do you desire to live a life of victory? Do you desire to win battles against our enemy, Satan? Do you desire to inspire and lead others to great victories? If you are saved today, you can! Ephesians 3:20
8. Every believer can courageously win battles for God. How? Let's draw some valuable principles from Jonathan's example.

First, trust God for the “impossible.”

1. Saul's 600 men were hiding out in retreat in Gibeah, with King Saul sitting under a tree.
2. Jonathan decided that he was tired of sitting. He looked at his armor-bearer, and notice what he said to him in verse 6.
 - Jonathan said, “These guys don't want to do anything, so let's me and you go and fight some Philistines. God is able *to save by many or by few.*”
3. In this case the “*few*” was two people: Jonathan and this other man. A person looks at this and says, “That's impossible!” Jonathan wasn't afraid to try the “impossible.”
4. God has a history of using the insignificant to accomplish the impossible. Matthew 19:26
5. What are some things that you would like to see God do through you? Do they look impossible? Do the odds look too great? Remember Ephesians 3:20?
6. When people find ways to accomplish the impossible, obviously it wasn't **really** impossible or they wouldn't have been able to do it. They simply had the faith and passion to attempt and accomplish what other people **said** was impossible.
7. While other people are sitting idly with their swords leaning against a tree, talking about the many reasons why it **can't** be done, the person of faith has his sword in hand and is out achieving the impossible.
8. If you are a believer today, there is one thing that **is** impossible. It is impossible for you to please God apart from faith. Hebrews 11:6

Second, leave your place of safety.

1. Winning spiritual battles begins with trusting God in your inner heart. But, that **inner** trust leads to **outward** action. vs. 1, 4-6
2. Jonathan had a desire, and he had a plan, but it wasn't without risk. He was leaving the safety of the crowd. vs. 8-12
3. It was much safer to sit beside daddy back under the pomegranate tree with 600 men around him. But that isn't how battles are won.
 - Illustration of Paul in Acts 14:19-21, and Acts 20:24
4. We all have a comfort zone, but that is not typically where battles are won. They are won on the front lines with soldiers who aren't afraid to take risks. 2 Timothy 2:1, 3
5. Is there a ministry you need to be involved in? Is there a ministry God would have you start? Is there a person you need to witness to? Is there an addiction you need to break? Is there a place of service you need to surrender to?
 - The courageous act, while the cowardly sit.
6. In order to courageously win battles, you must be willing to leave your place of safety.

Third, partner with other people of courage.

1. When Jonathan came up with this courageous plan, he needed some help. He appealed to his armor-bearer. How did he respond to Jonathan's vision? vs. 7
2. I love this: *"I am with thee according to thy heart."* He could have begun listing all the reasons why the plan was crazy and impossible. His armor-bearer was courageous, too.
 - The courageous see potential; the cowardly see problems.
 - Together, these two men won a battle which led to a huge victory for the nation of Israel. vs. 13-14
3. We see this principle of partnership throughout God's Word, in Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, David and his mighty men, Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Timothy, and Jesus and His disciples. Jesus sent the disciples out two by two.
4. Paul told Timothy to take the truth he had been given and commit it to other faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Paul was basically saying, "Timothy, surround yourself with other men of courage."
5. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 is very insightful. What are some of your spiritual goals? What would you like to see God do through you? Pray that God will bring people into your life that will be likeminded, and partner with you to accomplish great things for God.

Fourth, fight with the tools God has provided.

1. Do you remember what we said earlier? There were two swords in all of Israel, and they were owned by King Saul and Jonathan.

2. King Saul took his sword and sat under a tree. Jonathan took his sword, and went and won a great victory. The same thing happens today.
3. Every believer has God's Holy Spirit within, has the Word of God, and has spiritual gifts that God has given us for ministry. Every person at CrossRoads has access to the same spiritual opportunities to learn God's Word.
4. Some believers take those tools and use them for God's glory, win great victories, and see lives impacted for Christ. Other believers are like Saul, but instead of sitting under a tree, they simply sit in a pew or an easy chair and do nothing with the tools God has provided.
5. Paul told Timothy to stir up the gift that God had given him. This phrase "*stir up*" carries the idea of lighting a fire. Paul told Timothy to take what God had given him and use it!
6. Like Jonathan, we too have a sword. Not a physical sword, but a spiritual sword—the sword of the Spirit. We have the completed Word of God. Ephesians 6:13, 17
7. What are you doing with your sword? Are you sharpening it and using it to win victories over Satan? Or are you like King Saul, and your sword is leaning up against a tree?
 - The courageous fight with faith; the cowardly wait in fear.
8. Courageously winning spiritual battles will only come as we learn to rely on God's Word, and use the spiritual tools that God has provided for us.