

## DAVID'S FIRST VICTORY

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A SERMON  
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*“So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him, but there was no sword in the hand of David.”*  
*1 Samuel 17:50.*

A CAREFUL reading of the whole chapter will well repay your pains. I have selected a verse for convenience, but I need the entire narrative for a text. If you are well versed in the history, we shall have no need of any preface or translation. So we shall proceed at once to regard David in his conflict with Goliath and his victory over him, first, as *a type of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And, secondly, as *an example for ourselves*. As that which is a type of the head always bears a relationship to the members and, as the members of Christ's mystical body now are and shall yet more fully be like Him, it is but one thought, after all, that we shall be following out in the meditation that lies before us.

**I.** Let us begin by calling your attention to the fact that David in this matter WAS A TYPE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The early fathers of the Church were very great in opening up typical analogies. So full, indeed, were they in their expositions and so minute in their details, that at length they went too far and degenerated into trifling. Origen, for example, very notably exceeded what can be regarded as wise interpretation in giving spiritual meanings to literal records. And others who essayed to go yet farther than that great master of mysticism, very soon did much damage to the Church of God, bringing precious Truths of God into serious discredit. The study of the types of the Old Testament has scarcely regained its proper place in the Christian Church since the days in which those gracious men, by their imprudent zeal, perverted it. We cannot, however, bring ourselves to think that a good thing ceases to be good because it has, at some time, been turned to an ill account. We think it can still be used properly and profitably. Within certain limits, then—limits, we suppose, which there is little danger of transgressing in these mechanical, dry times—the types and the allegories of Holy Scripture may be used as a handbook of instruction—a *vade mecum* of sound Doctrine.

By the common consent of Evangelical Christians, David is seen to be an eminent type of the Lord Jesus Christ. With regard to this particular transaction let us note, at the outset, that before he fought with Goliath, David was anointed of God. Samuel had gone down to Bethlehem and poured a horn of oil upon his head. The parallel will readily occur to you. Thus has the Lord found out for Himself one whom He has chosen out of the people. With His holy oil has He anointed him. Upon Saul's head a small amount of oil was poured—upon David's head a full horn of oil. This may, perhaps, be designed to contrast the brevity and scant renown of Saul's reign with the length, power and excellence of the reign of David. Or, being interpreted *spiritually*, it may denote that the Law, the old Judaism of which Saul is the type, had but a limited measure of blessing, while that of the Gospel, which David represents, is characterized by its abounding fullness. Jesus, the antitype of David, is anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows! Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. The Spirit was not given by measure to Him.

David was anointed several times. He was anointed, as you read in the chapter preceding our text, “in the midst of his brothers”—anointed, as you find in 2 Samuel 2:4, by his brethren, the men of Judah—and anointed again, as you will observe in 2 Samuel 5:3, by all the elders of Israel. We will not go into that, now, but it will suffice us to note that our Lord was anointed of God, is anointed of His saints and shall be anointed of the whole Church. The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him and it was in the power of that Spirit with which He was anointed of the Father, that He went forth

to fight the great battles of His Church. At His Baptism, coming up out of the Jordan, He was anointed by the Spirit as it rested upon Him, descending out of Heaven like a dove—and straightway He went, as He was driven into the wilderness, and held that notable forty-days' conflict with the arch-fiend, the great adversary of souls! His battles were in the spirit and power of the Highest, for the might and majesty of the Eternal Spirit rested upon Him.

See how the correspondence goes on. Our Lord was sent by His Father to His brethren. As David was sent by Jesse to his brethren with suitable presents and comfortable words in order to commune with them, even so, in the fullness of time, was our Lord commissioned to visit His brethren. He remained concealed for a while in the house of His reputed father, but afterwards He came forth and was distinctly recognized as the Sent One of God, bearing countless gifts in His hands, coming on an mission of mercy and of love from God to those whom He was not ashamed to call His brethren. We have read how David was treated. His brethren did not receive him lovingly. They answered his unaffected kindness with unprovoked rudeness—they laid bitter things to his charge. How truly does this answer to the manner in which our Lord, the Son of David, was abused! He came unto His own and His own received Him not. Though He came to them with words of tenderness, they replied to Him with words of scorn. For His blessings they gave Him curses. For the bread of Heaven they gave Him stones and for the benedictions of Heaven they gave Him the spite of earth, the maledictions of Hell!

Never was a brother, “the first-born among many brethren,” so ill-used by the rest of the household! Surely that parable of the wicked husbandmen was fulfilled toward Him. We know it is written that the owner of the vineyard said, “They will reverence my son,” but, contrariwise, they said, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.” Jesus was roughly handled by His brethren whom He came to bless. David, you will remember, answered his brethren with great gentleness. He did not return railing for railing, but with much gentleness he endured their churlishness. In this he supplied us with but a faint picture of our beloved Master, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again. “Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself.” His only reply, even to the strokes which were to effect His death, was, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” “We hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised and we esteemed Him not.” Yet for all that, no word of anger dropped from His lips. He might have said, “Is there not a cause?” He spoke little, however, in His own defense. Rather He went about His life-work as zealously as if all who saw Him had approved of Him. So David, being thus rejected of his brethren, became a type of Christ.

We pass on to observe that David was moved by an intense love of his people. He saw them defied by the Philistines. As he marked how they were crushed in spirit before their formidable enemies, a fervent indignation stirred his soul, but when he heard the terms of defiance, he felt that the God of Israel, Himself, was compromised in this quarrel. The name of Jehovah was dishonored! That braggart giant who stalked before the hosts defied the armies of the living God! No wonder that the warm and devout heart of the brave young shepherd was moved with a mighty heaving! The passion of a warrior kindled in his breast at the sound of that profane voice of the uncircumcised Philistine who could trifle with the honor of Jehovah, the God of Heaven and of earth! A further motive was present to stimulate his patriotic ambition. How could David's bosom fail to glow with strong emotion when he was told that the man who would vanquish and slay that Philistine should be married to the king's daughter? Such a prize might well quicken his ardor. And with all these motives acting upon him, his determination to go forth and do battle with the champion of Philistia was prompt and resolute.

Now in all this he plainly foreshadowed our Lord Jesus Christ. He loved His own—He was always ready to lay down His life for the sheep. But He loved His Father. “Know you not,” He had said of old, “that I must be about My Father's business?” “The zeal of Your house has eaten Me up.” And then there was the joy that was set before Him that He should have the Church for His spouse—that at the peril, not to say the price of His life, He should obtain her—that He should see of the travail of His soul in her and should be satisfied. She was to be lifted up to His royalties and to share His crown and throne. The New Jerusalem, the mother of us all, was to be unto Jesus the gift of God as His reward! And this inspired Him, so he went forth and entered upon the battle for our sakes. Let us pause and bless His name that He ever should have loved the people and that the saints should have been in His hands! Let us bless Him that the zeal of God's house did eat Him up—that He consecrated Himself so fully to the great enterprise! Above all, let us humbly and gratefully bless Him that He loved us and gave Himself for us. As a part of His Church whom He had betrothed unto Himself

forever, we are partakers in all that He did! It was for us that He fought the fight, for us He won the victory, for us He has gone to Glory. And He will come, by-and-by, to take us up to behold that Glory and be with Him where He is. While we see the type in David, let us take care not to forget to adore Jesus, Himself, who is here mirrored forth to our minds in the achievement of our salvation.

I might, indeed, instance many further details in which David yet further became a type of our Lord. The whole narrative being full of minute particulars supplies us copiously with points of analogy. But there is one thing I would have you specially observe.

Goliath is called, in the Hebrew, not “champion,” as we read it in the English, but the *middleman*, the *mediator*. If you put the whole case fairly before your own minds, you will readily see the fitness of the word that is used. There is the host of the Philistines on the one side and there is the host of Israel on the other side. A valley lies between them. Goliath says, “I will represent Philistia. I stand as the middleman. Instead of all the rank and file coming forth personally to the fight, I appear as the representative of my nation—the mediator. Choose you a mediator who will come and contend with me. Instead of the battle being between the individuals of which the respective armies are composed, let two representative men decide in, duel to the death, the question in debate.” Now, it is exactly upon that ground that the Lord Jesus Christ fought the battles of His people. We fell representatively in the first Adam, and our salvation is now by another Representative—the Second Adam. He is the Middleman, the “one Mediator between God and men.” In His love to us and His zeal for the Glory of God, we may view Him as stepping forward into the midst of the arena which divides the camps of good and of evil, of God and of the devil—and there facing the defiant adversary—He stands to contend in our name and on our behalf if we are, indeed, His people, that He may decide for us the quarrel which never could have been decided by us. Personally, we should, beyond a doubt, have been put to the rout. But His one single arm is enough to win the victory for us and forever to end the conflicts between Heaven and Hell!

Mark well our warrior chief as He goes forth to the fight. The son of Jesse rejected the weapons with which Saul sought to arm him—he put the helmet on his head, the mail about his body and was about to gird the sword upon his loins, but he said, “I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them.” In like manner the Son of David renounced all earthly armor. They would have taken our Lord by force and made Him a king, but He said, “My Kingdom is not of this world.” Swords enough would have leaped from their scabbards at His bidding! It was not only Peter whose too-hasty sword smote the ear of Malchus, but there were many zealots who would have been all too glad to have followed the star of Jesus of Nazareth as in former days. And yet more frequently, in later days, the Jews followed impostors who declared themselves to be commissioned by the Most High for their deliverance. But Jesus said, “Put up again your sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”

One of the temptations of the desert was not only that He should have the kingdoms of the world, but that He should have them by the use of such means as Satan would suggest. He must fall down and worship Satan—He must use the carnal weapon which would be tantamount to worshipping him. Jesus would not have it. To this day the great fight of Jesus Christ with the powers of darkness is not with sword and helmet, but with the smooth stones of the brook! The simple preaching of the Gospel, with the shepherd's crook of the great Head of the Church held in our midst—this it is that lays low Goliath and shall lay him low to the last day! Vain is it for the Church even to think that she shall win the victory by wealth, or by rank, or by civil authority! No government will assist her. To the power of God alone she must look. “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord of Hosts. Happy will it be for the Church when she learns that lesson! The preaching of the Cross which is “to them that perish foolishness,” is, nevertheless, to us who believe Christ, “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

See, then, our glorious champion going forward to the fray with weapons of his own choosing—and those such as human wisdom despises because they do not appear to be adapted to the work! With great strength and power, nevertheless, did he go forth, for he went in the name of God. “You come to me,” said David, “with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts.” Such, too, is the predominating influence which renders the Gospel Omnipotent! Christ is God's Propitiation. God has “set Him forth to be a propitiation for sin.” Christ is appointed of God, anointed of God, sent of God. And the Gospel is God's message, attended with God's Spirit. If it is not, then it is weak as water—it must fail. But since the Lord has sent it and He has promised to bless it, we may rest assured it will accomplish the ends for which it was ordained. “I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts! “These

words might serve as a slogan for all those who are sent of Christ and represent Him in the dread battle for precious souls. This was Christ's watchword when, for our sakes and on our behalf, He came to wrestle with sin, to bear the wrath of God and to vanquish death and Hell! He came in the name of God!

Mark you well that David did smite Goliath and he smote him effectually not in the loins, or on the hand, or on the foot—but in a vital point he delivered the stroke that laid him low. He smote him on the brow of his presumption, on the forehead of his pride! I suppose he had lifted up his visor to take a look at his contemptible adversary, when the stone sank in, which let out forever the boastful soul. So, when our Lord stood forth to contend with sin, He projected His atoning Sacrifice as a stone that has smitten sin and all its powers upon the forehead. Thus, Glory be to God, sin is slain. It is not merely wounded, but it is slain by the power of Jesus Christ!

And remember that David cut off Goliath's head with his own sword. Augustine, in his comment on this passage, very well brings out the thought that the triumph of our Savior Jesus Christ is here set forth in the history of David. He, "through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." "He death by dying slew"—cut off the giant's head with his own sword. The Cross that was meant to be the death of the Savior was the death of sin! The Crucifixion of Jesus, which was supposed to be the victory of Satan, was the consummation of His victory over Satan! Lo, this day I see, in our conquering Hero's hand, the grizzly head of the monster, Sin, all dripping with gouts of gore! Look at it, you that once were under its tyranny! Look at the terrible lineaments of that hideous and gigantic tyrant! Your Lord has slain your foe! Your sins are dead—He has destroyed them! His own arm, single-handed and alone, has destroyed your gigantic enemy! "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Blessed and magnified be His holy name!

And when David had thus achieved the death of Goliath, he was met by the maidens of Israel who came forth and sang in responsive verse, accompanied with the music of their timbrels and joyous dancing, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." So he had his triumph. Meanwhile, the hosts of Israel, seeing that the Philistine giant was dead, took heart and dashed upon the adversary. The Philistines were frightened and fled, and every Israelite that day became a victor through the victory of David. They were more than conquerors, through him that had loved them and won the victory for them. So let us now think ourselves to be victors. Our Lord has won the victory. He is gone to His Glory. The angels have met Him on the way. They have said, "Lift up your heads, O you gates, even lift them up, you everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in." And they that have been with Him have answered to the question, "Who is this King of Glory?" They have said, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory."

And this day the feeblest Believer triumphs in Christ! Though we should have been beaten, nor could we have hoped for victory—yet now through Jesus Christ our Lord, we chase our enemies! We trample sin under our feet and we go from strength to strength through His completed victory. There is much for you to think of here. Will you think this over for yourselves? It is better I should not do all the thinking for you. You will find the analogy capable of much amplification. I have given you only, as it were, a sort of charcoal outline—a rough draft. Make a picture of it at your leisure and it may prove a beneficial study and a profitable meditation.

## II. With much brevity let us now revert to David as AN EXAMPLE FOR EVERY BELIEVER IN CHRIST.

Above all things, it behooves us, dear Brothers and Sisters, to consider that if we are ever to do anything for God and for His Church we must be anointed with holy oil. Oh, how vain it would be for us to grow zealous with a sort of creature carnal fanaticism and to attempt great things in sheer presumption which can only issue in utter failure! Unless the Spirit of God is upon us, we have no might from within and no means from without to rely upon. Wait upon the Lord, Beloved, and seek strength from Him alone! There cannot come out of you what has not been put into you. You must receive and then give out. Remember how the Lord Jesus describes it—"The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." And again, in another place, "He that believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

You cannot do David's work if you have not David's anointing! When you remember that your Divine Master tarried for the heavenly anointing, you can hardly expect to do without it! Be not so foolish. Christ went not to His public ministrations till the Spirit of God rested upon Him. The Apostles tarried at Jerusalem and went not forth to preach till power were given to them from on high. The point, the pre-requisite, the *sine qua non* with us, is to have that power. Oh,

to preach in that power—to pray in that power—to look after wandering souls in that power! Your Sunday school work, your home missionary work, your evening form of ministry for Christ must be done in that power! Get to your knees! Get to the Cross! Get to your Master's feet! Sit still in faith and hope until He shall have given you the strength that shall qualify you to do the Master's work, in the Master's way, to the Master's praise!

David, too, stands before us as an example of the fact that our opportunity will come if our efficiency has been bestowed, without our being very particular to seek it. David fell into position. The place he was fitted to occupy, he was Providentially called to fill as a great man in Israel. Little did he guess, when he went with the load of bread, and corn, and cheese, that he was, before long, to be distinguished beyond all other men in Palestine! Yes it was so. Beloved, do not be in a hurry to look out for your sphere. Be ready for your sphere—your sphere will come to you. I speak to many dear young Brothers who are studying for the ministry. Be prepared for any work rather than be looking out for some particular work. God has His niche for you. You will land on your feet—depend upon that. Be ready. Your business is to be ready. Have your tools well sharpened and know how to handle them. The place will come to you, the best place for you, if you are not so much looking after that which meets your taste, as after that which proves you to be a vessel fit for the Master's use! David finds his occasion. He has received the Spirit, first, which is the main thing—and then he has found the occasion which calls out his credentials.

I gather from David's example that when we feel a call to do something for God and for His Church, we need not wait until those whom we hold in respect coincide with us as to the propriety of entering upon the service. Had David said—"Well, I shall wait till Eliab, Abinadab and Shammah, my elder brothers, are all perfectly agreed that I am the man to fight Goliath"—I suspect he would never have fought with Goliath at all! Great deference is due to the judgment of our seniors, but greater respect is due to the motions of the Spirit of God within our heart. I would to God there were more regard shown for those inward monitions among Christians than there is known to be in these times. If you have a thought put into your heart, or a charge laid upon your conscience, obey it, man! Act up to it, though no one else perceives it or encourages you. If God has shown you His counsel, at your peril hide the presage or shrink from the performance! What? With the fear of God in our hearts and a commission from God in our hands, shall we halt and hesitate and become the servants of *men*? I would rather die than have to come into this pulpit to ask your leave, or to get any man's consent as to what I shall preach!

God speaks, by His Spirit, what He has to say to me and, by the help of His good Spirit, I will deliver it to you as I hear it from Him. May this tongue be silent before it becomes the servant of man! David was of that mind. He felt he had something to do and though he could listen to what other people had to say, yet they were no masters of his. He served the living God and he went about the business entrusted to him undaunted by any judgment they might form of him. He that speaks for God should speak honestly. Let others criticize and sift the chaff from the wheat. He must expect that. But as for himself, let him give out that pure wheat as he believes it to be and fear no man, lest he comes under the condemnation of the God of Heaven! Go, my Brother, about your business, if God gives it to you to do. If I upbraid you, what of that? I am but a man. Or if all those in whose good esteem you would gladly stand, turn upon you with hard suspicions and cutting censures, they are but men and to God alone is your allegiance due! Go about your Master's work as David did, with dauntless nerve but modest demeanor. He would be an evil servant who, after once getting His Master's orders, should leave them unperformed and excuse himself by saying, "I met one of my fellow servants and he said he thought I might be too bold in my adventure and, therefore, I had better not attempt it." To your own Master you will stand or fall! Take care that you stand well with Him!

Learn from David, too, to return quiet answers to those who would roughly put you aside from your work. Generally it is better to return no answer at all. I think David spoke not so well by word as by deed. His conduct was more eloquent than his language. As he came back from the fight, holding up the giant's head, I could hope that Eliab saw him and that Abinadab and Shammah came out to meet him. If they did, he might simply have held up the trophy and allowed its ghastly visage to reply for him. It is not, they would think, after all, because of his pride or the evil of his heart, or from an idle curiosity to see the battle that he has come. They would perceive that he had come to do God's work in his own way—that God had helped him to gain the victory, rout the foe and relieve the fears of Israel—and that through the man whom they despised the Lord had made His own name glorious!

Learn again, from David's example, the prudence of keeping to tried weapons. I have often heard it spoken of as an unlikely thing that David could kill the giant with a stone. I think those who talk so miss the point. What missile could be handier or better suited for the occasion? If the fellow was tall, a sling would carry a stone high enough to reach him. And if he was strong, very strong, the sling would give such impetus to the stone that David could assail his adversary without getting within his reach. It was the best weapon he could have used. Oriental shepherds, if those of olden time were like those of modern days, had practice enough to make them proficient in slinging stones. They spend many hours both alone and with their fellows over feats of the sling. It is generally their best weapon for the protection of their sheep in the vast solitudes. I do not doubt that David had learned to sling a stone to a hair's breadth and not miss. As for the sword, he had never had one in his life, for there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan, save that which was found with Saul and Jonathan, his son. We are told as much as that in the 13<sup>th</sup> Chapter. The Philistines had so completely disarmed the whole populace that they had not got any such weapons. With the use of them, therefore, David could not have been familiar. And as to the coat of mail—a cumbersome, uneasy, comfortless equipment—the wonder to me is how the knights of old did anything at all in such accoutrements! No marvel that David put the thing off. He felt most at ease in his own shepherd's garb.

Of course we are not going to infer that unsuitable instruments are desirable. We teach nothing so romantic or absurd! It well becomes us to use the most suitable tools we can find. As for those stones out of the brook, David did not pick them up at hazard—he carefully chose them, selecting smooth stones that would exactly fit in his sling—the kind of stone he thought best fitted for his purpose. Nor did he trust in his sling. He tells us he trusted in God, but he went to work with his sling as if he felt the responsibility to be his own. To miss the mark would prove his own clumsiness—to hit his target would be of God's enabling. Such, my Brothers and Sisters, is the true philosophy of a Christian's life. You are to do good works as zealously as if you were to be saved by your good works—and you are to trust in the merits of Christ as though you had done nothing at all! So, too, in the service of God, though you are to work for God as if the fulfillment of your mission rested with yourselves, you must clearly understand and steadfastly believe that, after all, the whole matter, from first to last, rests with God! Without Him, all you have ever planned or performed is unavailing.

That was sound philosophy of Mahomet's when the man said, "I have turned my camel loose and trusted in Providence." "No," answered he, "tie your camel up and then trust in Providence." Do the best you can and trust in God. God never meant that faith in Him should be synonymous with sloth. Why, for the matter of that, if it is all God's work and that is to be the only consideration, there is no need for David to have a sling! No, there is not any need for David at all. He may go back, lie on his back in the middle of the field, and say, "God will do His work—He does not need me." That is how fatalists would talk, but not how Believers in God would act! They say, "God wills it, therefore I am going to do it"—not, "God does it and, therefore, there is nothing for me to do." No, "Because God works by me, therefore I will work by His good hand upon me. He is putting strength into His feeble servant and making use of me as His instrument, good for nothing though I am apart from Him. Now will I run to the battle with confidence and I will use my sling with the best skill I have, taking quiet, calm, deliberate aim at that monster's brow since I believe that God will guide the stone and accomplish His own end."

When you are bent on serving God, give Him your best. Keep not back anything of nerve or muscle, anything of skill or wisdom you can dedicate to the enterprise. Say not, "Anything will do. God can bless my lack as well as my competency." Doubtless He can, but undoubtedly He will not! Be careful to do your best. David in his old age and his riper experience would not offer to God that which cost him nothing. Do not attempt to render unto God slovenly service and flatter yourselves that he will bless it. *He can bless it*—but that is not the way in which He usually deigns to work. Though He often takes rough tools, He fashions them and polishes them for His use. He can convert rude men into able ministers of the New Testament. Think not, however, that His Grace will excuse your presumption. But go with the instruments you have proved. When any of you working men attempt to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, do not try the fine arguments that are often used to combat infidels. You will never manage them! They will be sure to embarrass you!

Tell your neighbors and friends what you have felt and handled of the Word of Life. Declare to them those things that are written in the Scriptures. These texts are the smooth stones that will suit your sling. Keep to these things. Why, they tell us nowadays, that we ought to take up those arguments which are invented by modern philosophers—examine them, study them—and come forward on the Sabbath and at other times to answer them—that we should use historical

research and logical acumen to rebut infidel calumnies! Ah, Saul's armor does not fit us. They that like it may wear it, but, after all, to preach Christ and Him Crucified—to tell out the old, old story of eternal love and of the blood which sealed it, the manner of Redemption, the Truth of God's unchangeable Grace—this is to use those stones and that sling which will surely find the forehead of the foe!

Next, observe that from the work which David began, he ceased not till he had finished it. He had laid the giant prone upon the soil, but he was not satisfied till he had cut off his head. I wish that some who work for Christ would be as thorough as this young volunteer was! Have you taught a child the way of salvation? Do not leave off till that child is enrolled in the fellowship of Believers! Have you faithfully preached the Gospel to any congregation of people? Continue to instruct, counsel and encourage them until you see them established in the faith! Or if you have refuted a heresy, or denounced a vice, follow up the assault until the evil is exterminated! Not only kill the giant, but have his head off! Never do the work of the Lord imperfectly. Never spare, in pity, any device of the devil. Bad habits and besetting sins should be leveled with a decisive blow. But let not that be enough! Give them no chance of recovering their strength. With humble penitence and earnest resolution—in reliance on God and detestation of the foe—see to it that the head shall be taken from the sin as well as the stone sunk in its forehead! In so doing you may look for help you had not reckoned on. You have no sword with you—you have not wanted to cumber yourself with one, even as David had no need to carry a sword in his hand, for Goliath was carrying a sword with him which might well serve for his own execution. Whenever you serve God, you strive against error—and remember that every error carries the sword with which it will be slain!

In maintaining the cause of the Truth of God, we need not be surprised if the fight is long. But we may always count on the pride of the adversary turning to his own hurt. The conflict will be shortened by himself. When the invaders, most of all, relied on the alliances they had formed, it often happened that Israel won the day through the Moabites and the Assyrians falling out among themselves. Very frequently it has been God's plan to let His adversaries turn upon each other and end the fight to His servants' comfort! Behold the giant's head taken off with his own sword! Let it be before your eyes for a sign. It matters not, Brothers, though we should be in the minority on certain eminent matters, as we undoubtedly are. The question for you is, are you right? Are you right? The right is sure to win! Have you the Truth of God on your side? Have you the Bible on your side? Have you Christ on your side? Well, you may belong to a despised community. You may be associated with a very few and a very poor people. Flinch not—let not your heart quail. Had you no strength with which to overcome the adversary excepting that which is promised by God, you have quite enough!

But there lies in ambush, in the camp of your adversary, an assistance and an aid to the Truth of God that you have not, perhaps, thought of. The old dragon stings himself to death! As vice consumes the vitals of the man who indulges in it, so does error, in the long run, become its own destroyer! Full often the Truth of God shines out the more brightly from the very fact that an error has beclouded the world with its dense shadows. Go on, then! Strive with coolness and courage! Be not daunted by the comely face, the princely figure, or the battle array of your antagonist! Let not his vaunting words deter you. Call on the name of Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, and use, even in God's battles, those weapons which you have tested and proved. But take care to go through with God's work—do it thoroughly, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith—and so, Beloved, you may expect to go from strength to strength and bring glory to God!

I would we were all on the Lord's side—that we were all the soldiers of Christ. Do any here confess that they are not? Are there any of you who feel sin lying heavily upon you and yet you gladly would be at peace with God, in fellowship with Jesus? Beloved, Jesus has never yet rejected one that came to Him! It has never yet been said that His blood was not able to cleanse the vilest soul! Go to Him! You cannot give Him greater joy than by going to Him and confessing your sin and seeking His mercy. He wants to be gracious. He slays sin, but He takes pity on sinners. He is ready to pardon them. He is the enemy of Goliath, but He sits on Zion's hill, glad to welcome the very poorest of the poor that come to Him. If you are the worst sinner that ever lived, He is still able to save to the uttermost! If you have no hope and no confidence—if you feel as though sentence had gone forth that you should die forever, your fears are not due to God's counsels. He has not spoken the bitter things you have imagined against yourself! Give ear to what He has said—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

Oh, to be on Christ's side maintains the heart in calm and inflames the soul with joy, notwithstanding the pain that now tortures your nerves, or the shame that mantles your cheeks! But ah, to be on the other side—to be an enemy of Jesus—is a woe that blights all present joy and promises all future curses! The future, the future, the future! This is the worst of all to be dreaded. “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.” The Lord give you, every one of you, to be thus timely wise, for His name's sake! Amen.

—Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307

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