

22. A Man Who Believes in Me

We are realizing that Old Testament believers had no thought of Nicene definitions regarding God or salvation. Despite the law, they seem to be more inclined towards the Spirit than many Christians.

In fact, those who truly perceived God, believed emphatically in God-with-me. And no one assumed God-with-me more or more recklessly than David did.

We assume that David had turned his heart towards the God of Israel long before Samuel anointed him. We assume that the song of his heart began before he left his mother's care.

Hearing Jesus. Then, consider this word. – We know that the Son of God IS presently and actively come and has given us an understanding, a through-mind [a spirit-mind capacity], so that we might know [Him who is] the true (1 John 5).

There is no such thing as knowing God apart from that connection that Jesus alone gives; more than that all of these are coming out from Jesus' own good-speaking. My former thinking that the Old Testament characters did not have the relationship with God that we have, that is, that they were not "born again," has now vanished.

Even as a boy, David heard Jesus singing inside his heart.

The Chronology. Now, when I look at Reese's chronology, both with the years of David's life before he became king and the placement of his early psalms, I find that here only do I disagree with Reese.

From David becoming king, in 1025 BC, the chronology is more accurate, but it was a teenager who killed Goliath, not a 26-year-old man. And David's first poems could not have been the aged-man thinking of Psalm 39.

For our purposes, then, we will take Psalm 23 as David's first written poem. In fact, we could place at least a couple of years between Samuel anointing David and David singing for Saul.

Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

God-with-Me. These are the words of a teenage boy, anointed of the Spirit, words that will shape the entire course of his life.

Now, the central words of this poem are "You are with me." This was David's central knowing, a knowing that was always profoundly there, regardless of his stumbling life.

I underlined all the direct "God-with-me" statements in the Psalm. Then, we can see the many "literary" directions, and the many life-experience directions down which David takes the meaning of that profound absolute. What you will not ever find in David is any sense or place or theology allowing any iota of not-God-with-ME.

Psalm 22. Now, in saying this about David, we do not, then, separate him from all the messiness of the human frame, in and out, up and down, and doing stupid things on a regular basis. Here is the point I am after. Psalm 22 is NOT an isolated or solitary experience.

Now, Reese sets Psalm 22, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken me,” as David ascends the Mount of Olives while fleeing Absalom’s rebellion. And that is most likely where it fits, when David is 63 years old.

But the reality of sharing the thoughts of Jesus is embedded in the entire course of David’s knowledge of God with him.

Jesus in Us. I just turned 64, and when I look back and think about ME at age 19 and 21, and so on, I see the same knowing of God in me then that is in me now. I had no idea what any of it meant then, of course, yet it is the same knowing.

And that’s what I wrote in “The Vision and I,” that I must know that it is the same God speaking the same word inside of me all the way through, regardless of how I understood that word or not.

I feel an even greater urgency with the story of David as I have from the start of this study, that we know LIFE only as Jesus shows us Himself in you and me through David’s expression of his human soul through everything.

A Time of War. Let’s go now to the story of David and Goliath. And the essence of this story is “a man who believes in Me.”

In fact, this is the time period of David’s life as John listed it in 1 John 2. – I write to you, young men, because you have already overcome the evil one. – I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives and abides inside of you, and you have overcome the evil one.

This is the time as David wrote, “You teach my hands to war, and my fingers to fight” (Psalm 144). It is in the midst of battle that our faith is proven true.

The Law of Sin and Death. You know the story, so I will position just the key parts. First, here is the contention posed by Goliath, a ten-foot-tall giant of a man. **“I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together.”** When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

Goliath represents the entirety of the law of sin and death, a law that Nicene theology places heavily upon Christians. *“You are a sinner, and you must die.”*

When I have challenged this law before Christians, I have watched their faces darken as they are dismayed and afraid.

Teenage Foolishness. After forty days of this challenge, it so happened that Goliath roared it again while David happened to be visiting his older brothers. David had all the foolish brashness of a teenager. He went around asking, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”

This did not go over very well with grown men, and David’s brothers were especially ticked off. And David said, **“What have I done now? Is there not a cause?”**

They all saw themselves against Goliath; David saw God.

Boasting Confidence. When David finally stood before Saul, Saul said to him, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.”

But David recounted his history with God and with giants and said, “The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”

Most Christian leaders I have known would have counseled David that he was being presumptive and foolish. The writer of Hebrews said that this is how we walk as part of Christ – with boasting confidence in God.

Reckless Confidence FIRST! There is no question that David was reckless, but there is also no question that he was single-minded in his certainty of God-with-me.

Let's position this teenage recklessness, however, inside the word David carried in his heart from Samuel, "My heart is like God's heart; God has anointed me." At this point in time, David was interpreting that word in an outward manner, which is where one must start.

God has a path set to bring David down to God's humility, but godly humility comes out from reckless confidence towards God first, NEVER the other way around.

Humility Comes from Confidence. The one who says, "*Little old me, I'm just a nobody in the sight of God,*" will never please God. Neither will such FAKE 'humility' ever become a godly humility.

Reckless confidence is the ONLY thing that pleases God, and that reckless confidence towards God continues even while everything else is coming to nothing. "God is with me. That's all I know, regardless."

To David, the arrogant cries of the law of sin and death against the salvation of God must not be allowed to continue one moment more. David was ready to cast that false accusation DOWN.

A Path Prepared. I may have been an arrogant little twerp when, having just turned twenty, I raised my hand in the affirmation that God was well able to remove sin and death from my experience.

God certainly had prepared a path that would take me into the worst years of my life. But my confidence in a Personal God utterly WITH ME has never ceased, regardless of all my ins and outs. And the wondrous thing about Jesus living as you is that you can say the same, regardless, for you place Jesus upon every moment of your life, just as I do.

All of His ways concerning me are perfect. He has never led me wrong; He has never not led me.

Am I a Dog? Goliath was not impressed with David. *“Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?”*

Picture a man as muscular and capable as Arnold Schwarzenegger or Dwayne Johnson, but ten feet tall, which is two feet taller than your eight-foot ceiling, massive, muscular, and accustomed to the joy of chopping little people to pieces. Here is what he says, *“Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!”*

This is the boast of the law of sin and death in Nicene theology – *you have a beastly flesh filled with demons.*

A Bold Proclamation. This is my contention; this is where it starts. You cannot know the revelation of Christ unless you start with an arrogant boasting that God is well able to defeat sin and death and make you just like the Lord Jesus Christ right here on this earth right now in this age.

To be like Jesus, you WILL know the humility of Christ, most certainly, but you will never know that humility without an overwhelming boast in God first.

It is the doorway God requires. – Having therefore a BOLD PROCLAMATION of entrance, let us approach EVERYTHING inside of God with full assurance of faith.

Defying Death. **Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you... that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands.”**

Please understand. While I have been confident towards God, I have also been frightened of the beast in this world.

Who Can Make War Against the Beast? And I must confess that, as we see a horrifying reality open its jaws to consume everyone over the next few months, I have been skirting around the edges of being afraid. David’s words are exactly what I need right now.

So, let’s turn the picture of Goliath from the larger law of sin and death to the present Beast that is poised to devour the lives of every person on earth, including you and me, in the closing months of this year of our Lord, 2020.

That Beast is very real and there is no fighting against it. Everyone who fights will be serving Beast in its triumph. We have not known such awfulness in our own lifetime.

Defying the Beast. Then we say to the wickedness of this world, “You come against us with your all-pervasive technology, with your medical tyranny, with your overwhelming firepower. But we come against you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the God of the Christian Church, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into our hand, and we will strike you and take your beastly heads from you... that all the earth may know that there is a God in His Church. Then all believers across the earth shall know that the Lord does not save with outward devices; for the battle is the Lord’s, and He will give you into our hands.”

Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit.

Moses Stood, but David Ran. This is where faith begins and ends, the faith of Jesus. We begin with presumptive confidence in God; we end with presumptive confidence in God. And if we have learned no sufficiency in ourselves, but all sufficiency in God in-between, then we have learned all.

Stand still and see the Salvation of God, for the beast and all his armies, which you see today, you will see no more forever.

Moses stood still, but not David. David never stood still. **When the Philistine ...drew near to meet David, then David ...ran toward ...the Philistine.**

Psalms 23 Again. Let's look again at David's first poem. – The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's **sake**.

Yeah, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The Lord Is My Shepherd. The Lord is my Shepherd. – This is why I must have Jesus, for by myself I am afraid. And because Jesus has become as real to us as any outward person, Jesus Himself inside our hearts, we rest utterly inside of Him.

I am back writing Hebrews in *The Jesus Secret II* and I am going back and forth between confidence and rest.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You, Jesus, are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. As we have known His yoke, so we know His protection.

For the Sake of the Church. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
– This is exactly where we are, for in the midst of a world descending into horror, God is revealing His Word to us as never before. The Word become us is our comfort and safety.

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Our focus remains upon the Church, despite any immediate difficulty. Their protection before God is our primary concern. We cast down all accusation and evil for the sake of our brothers and sisters.

Reading for Next Time. The next lesson is “A Man Who Runs and Hides.” These are the critical years of David’s formation under the hand of God upon him. In fact here is where reading *A Tale of Three Kings* by Gene Edwards finds its place. If you do not have a copy, get one and read it.

Read 1 Samuel 18, 19, 21, 22, 23. If there will be any of the Psalms added to this, I will let you know.

Quoting from Gene Edwards. – There in those caves, drowned in the sorrow of his song, and in the song of his sorrow, David very simply became the greatest hymn writer and the greatest comforter of broken hearts this world shall ever know.

Pray with Me. This time we are calling God into our world, and this time we need a God of WAR to come through us.

If the leaders of the world do what they are saying right now they intend to do, then our lives are about to become difficult, to say the least.

“O Lord, our God, you are our Father, and you are our Protection. You say that when the enemy comes in as a flood, that You raise up a standard for the sake of Your people. Father, we are Your standard, the proving of Christ Jesus out from our hearts. God, our Father, we call You out from our hearts and into our world as the Mighty Protector of Your Church, our brethren across the earth and us.

A God of War. Oh God, our Father, You are a God of war, mighty in battle. Let God arise from the midst of His Church and His enemies be scattered. Let God arise and all who oppose goodness and truth be cast down.

Arise, O Lord, in Your anger; lift Yourself up because of the rage of the enemies of Your Church throughout the world.

We praise You, O Lord, with our whole heart. Our enemies are turned back, they fall and perish at Your Presence. You rebuke the nations; You bring to nothing those who seek to destroy Your Beloved Church. Your Salvation, O God, comes out from Zion, out from our hearts into our world.

Casting Down All. Father, we have set our hope upon You as the carrying Grace revealed now through us into our world. You are our strength, the Rock of our hearts, our fortress and mighty deliverer. We call You into all Salvation now.

We are that revelation of Your Salvation upon this earth. You show Yourself mighty through us into our world, casting down all that opposes Christ and His Church.

Let the God of our Salvation be exalted in all the earth. Subdue the peoples under us; deliver Your people from all their enemies in every place. We give thanks to you, O Lord, among all the nations, and sing praises to Your name.

Speaking Christ through the Psalms. Wow, this is so cool. I have not even thought about speaking Christ our life through the Old Testament, but suddenly all of the Psalms are opened to us for such wondrous speaking and joy of faith.

The Jesus Secret II is much too large a book already, for anything to be added, but it would really be fun to turn the Psalms into the speaking of Christ.

I will percolate on that thought until I find a place to do it. In fact, looking at just Psalms 1 & 2 has me all excited.

– Speaking Christ through the Psalms –